A RECORD OF ANCIENT HISTORIES,

Entituled in Latine:

Gesta Romanorum.

Discoursing of sundry examples, for the advancement of *Vertue, and the abandoning* of Vice: No lesse pleasant in Reading, than profitable in Practise.

Now newly Perused and Corrected, *with some thing* added, by

R. R.

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THE HISTORIE OF *Gesta Romanorum.*

The Argument.

Mans soule is dearly beloved of God her Father. And yet for sundry good graces shee is tempted of the Devill by three diuers meanes, at three severall ages in this mortall life: if she resist and overcome the same, shee is hereby adopted to the fruition of Matrimoniall joy in heaven, with Christ the Sonne of God.

The first Historie.

SOmetimes there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour, which had a fair creature to his Daughter, named Athalanta, whom divers great Lords, and many noble Knights desired to have to Wife. This Athalanta was wondrous swift of foot: wherefore such a law was made, that no man should have her to wife except he could outrunne her

and take her by ſwiftneſſe of fæt. It befell that many came to run with her, but could not overtake her. At the laſt there came a Knight named Pomeis, unto her Father, and ſaid to him: My Lord, if it pleaſe you to give me your daughter to wife, I will run with her. Then ſaid her father, there is a law made, that who ſo will have her to wife muſt firſt run with her: and if her overtake her not he ſhall loſe his head, and if he overtake her, then ſhall I wed her unto him.

And when the Emperour had told him all the perill that might fal in the winning of her, the Knight voluntarily granted to abide that jeopardy. Then the Knight provided him thræ balls of gold againſt the running. And when they had begun to runne a litle ſpace, the young Lady overranne him: then the Knight threw forth before her the firſt ball of gold: and when the Damſell ſaw the ball, ſhe ſtooped and took it up, and in the meane while the Knight gat before her, but that availed little: for when ſhe perceived it, ſhæ ran ſo faſt, that in ſhort ſpace ſhee gat before him againe. And then he threw forth the ſecond ball of gold, and ſhe ſtooped as ſhee did before and took it up, and in that while

the

the Knight gat before her againe: which this young Damsell seeing, constrayned her selfe, and ranne so fast, that she soone had him at a vantage againe, and was afore him: now by that time they were nigh the mark where they should abide, wherefore the Knight threw forth the third Ball before her, and she stooped down to take up the Ball, and while she was taking up the third Ball, the Knight gat before her, and was first at the mark. And thus was she wonne.

The Morall.

By this Emperour is understood the Father of Heaven, and by the Damsell is understood the Soule of man with whom many Devils desire to run, and to deceive her through their temptations, but shee withstandeth them mightily, and overcommeth them. And when he hath done his worst, and may not speed, then maketh hee three Bals of Gold, and casteth them before her in the three ages of man, that is to say, in youth, in manhood, and in old age. In youth the Devill casteth the Ball of Lechery before her, that is to say, the desire of the flesh: nevertheless for all this ball, oftentimes man overcommeth the di-

vell; by acknowledging of his ſinnes to God, by hearty repentance and amendment of life. The ſecond ball is the ball of Pride, the which the Divell caſteth to man in his manhood, that is to ſay in his middle age: but this ball, man oft-times overcommeth as he did the firſt, but let him beware of the third ball, which is Covetouſneſſe, that the Devill caſteth to man in his old age, which is dreadfull: for except a man may overcome this Ball, with the other two, he ſhall loſe his Honour, that is to ſay, the Kingdome of Heaven. For when a man burneth in Covetouſneſſe, he thinketh not on ghoſtly Riches (for ever his heart is ſet on worldly goods) and reckoneth not of Prayers, nor of well doing: and thus loſeth he his heritage, to the which God hath bought him with his precious blood: unto the which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt bring us all.

The Argument.

As God allotteth divers men divers callings and eſtates of living in this World, ſo is every man tried by the rules of life and doctrine, whether his practiſe agree with his profeſſion, in proſiting himſelfe without prejudice to others, wherein if he

he ſo hold himſelfe content, for ſuch a Sonne the heavenly Father hath planted a Tree of heavenly treaſure in the life that ſhall be everlaſting.

The ſecond Hiſtory.

THere dwelt ſometime in Rome a wiſe and mighty Emperour, named Anſelme, which bare in his armes a ſhield of Silver with five red Roſes. This Emperour had three Sonnes whom he loved much; he had alſo continuall warre with the King of Egypt: in which warre he loſt all his temporall goods, except a precious Tree. It fortuned after on a day that hee gave battell to the ſame King of Egypt wherein he was grievouſly wounded. Nevertheleſſe hee obtained the victory, notwithſtanding hee had his deadly wound, wherefore while he lay at point of death, he called unto him his eldeſt Sonne and ſaid: My deare and welbeloved Sonne, all my temporall riches I have ſpent, and almoſt nothing is left me, except a precious Tree, the which ſtandeth in the midſt of mine Empire: I give to thee all that is under the earth, and above the earth of the ſame Tree. O my reverend Father (quoth he) I thank you much.

Then

Then ſaid the Emperour, call to mée my ſecond Sonne. Anon the eldeſt Sonne greatly joying of his fathers gift, called in his brother. And when he came the Emperour ſaid: My deare ſonne (quoth he) I may not make my teſtament, for as much as I have ſpent all my goods, except a trée which ſtandeth in mine Empire, of the which Tree I bequeath to thée all that is great and ſmall. Then anſwered hée and ſaid: My reverend father, I thank you much. Then ſaid the Emperour, call to me my third Sonne, and ſo it was done, And when he was come, the Emperour ſaid: My deare ſonne, I muſt die of theſe wounds, and I have only a precious trée, of which I have bequeathed thy Brethren their portions, and to thee I bequeath thy portion: for I will that thou have of the ſaid Trée all that is wet and drie. Then ſaid his Sonne: Father I thank you.

Soone after the Emperour had made this bequeſt he died. And anon the eldeſt Son ſhortly after took ſeaſon of the trée. Now when the ſecond Sonne heard this he came to him, ſaying: My Brother, by what Law or title occupie you this Trée? Deare brother (quoth he) I occupy it by this title, my father gave me all that is nu-

der the earth and above of the said tree, by reason therefore the tree is mine. Unknowing to thee, quoth the second brother, he gave me all that is in breadth, length, & depnesse of the said tree, and therefore I have as great right in the tree as you. This hearing the third son, he came to them and said: My welbeloved brethren, it behoveth you not to strive for this tree, for as much right have I in this tree as ye: for by the law, ye wot, the last will and testament ought to stand: for of truth he gave mee of the said tree all that is wet and dry, and therefore the tree by right is mine: but for as much as your words are of great force and mine also, my counsell is that we be judged by reason: for it is not good nor commendable that any strife or dissention should be among us. Here beside dwelleth a King of reason, therefore to avoid strife let us goe unto him, and each of us lay his right before him, and like as he shall judge let us stand to his judgment: then said his brethren, this counsell is good, wherefore they went all three unto the King of Reason, and each of them severally shewed forth his right unto him like as it is said before.

When the King had heard the tidings, he rehearsed

rehearsed them all againe severally, first saying to the eldest Sonne, thus: You say (quoth the King) that thy father gave thee all that is under the earth, and above the earth of the said tree. And to the second brother he bequeathed al that is in breadth, length and deepnesse of that tree. And to the third brother he gave all that is wet and dry.

And with that he laid the law to them, and said, that this Will ought to stand.

Now my deare Friends, briefly I shall satisfie all your requests: and when he had thus said, he turned him unto the eldest Brother, saying, My deare friend, if you list to abide the judgement of right, it behoveth you to be letten bloud of the right arme. My Lord quoth he) your will shall bee done. Then the King called for a discreet Physitian, commmanding him to let him bloud.

When the eldest sonne was thus letten bloud, the King said to them all three: My deare Friends (quoth hee) where is your father buried? then answered they and said: forsooth my Lord in such a place. And the King commanded to dig in the ground for the body, and to take a bone out of his brest, and to bury the body againe:

and

and so it was done. And when the bone was taken out, the King commanded that it should be laid in the blood of the elder brother, and it should lie till it had received kindly the blood, and then to be laid in the Sunne and dryed, and after that it should be washt with cleare water: his servants fulfilled all that he commanded: and when they began to wash, the blood vanished cleane away. When the King saw this, he said to the second sonne, it behoveth that thou bee letten blood as thy brother is. Then said he, my Lord, your will shall be fulfilled, and anon he was done unto like as his brother was in all things, and when they began to wash the bone, the blood vanished away. Then said the King to the third sonne, it behoveth thee to be letten blood likewise. He answered and said: My Lord it pleaseth me well so to be. When the youngest brother was letten blood, and done unto in all things as his two brethren were before, then the Kings servants began to wash the bone but neither for washing nor rubbing might they doe away the blood off the bone, but it ever appeared bloody. When the King saw this, hee said: It appeareth openly now that this blood is of the nature of the

bone

bone, thou art his true sonne, and these other two be bastards, I judge thee the tre for evermore.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour is our Lord Jesus Christ, which bare a shield of silver, with five red Roses, that is, his body that was so fair, so clear, and more radiant then any silver, according to the Psalmist: Speciosus forma præ filiis hominum, that is, he was more faire of shape then all the children of men. By the five Roses we understand his five Wounds, which he suffered for mankind. And by the King of Egypt we understand the devill, against whom he fought all the time of his life, and at the last he was slaine for mankind. Nevertheless before his death he made his testament to his three sonnes.

By the first, to whom he gave of the tree all that was under the earth, & above the earth, we understand such mighty men and others of all estates in this world, as not content with their calling, seek ambitiously the subversion of others, to magnifie and exalt themselves. By the second sonne, to whom he gave the tre in length,

breadth,

breadth and depnesse, we understand such worldly wise men in this world, which in their subtilty attempt to winne or to lose all. By the third Sonne, to whom he gave all that was wet and dry of the Tree, wee understand every good Christian Prince, Noble-man, Magistrate, or meaner person in every Common-wealth whereseever, which (eschewing all ambition and covetousnesse) holdeth himselfe content with the Providence of God, and in his own calling laboureth truly to doe good unto all men; yea, though himselfe sustaine injuries, suffering now solace, then care: now riches, then poverty: and receive all this thankfully to have this precious Tree thus bequeathed unto them. This tree is the tree of Paradise, that is, everlasting joy, which is given to us all if we take it thankfully. This every man obtaineth not, therefore it behoveth them to goe unto the King of reason, that is, unto the Father of heaven that knoweth all things. The first Son was let blood, and in his blood the bone was laid. By this bone we shall understand our strong faith in Christs merits, and by the blood, the lively and fruitfull sap of good workes proceeding out of the same, which are rare

things,

things to be found in those that seek their own private gaine, which when they are let blood by the sharp Launce of Gods Iustice, though it be stablished with Diuine Predication, and made dry with the Sun of outward Profession yet being washt with the water of swelling Pride, Malice, Enuye such like, then the faith in Christs merits, is as though we had not receiued it, and the lively and fruitfull sap of good workes hath no power to tarry vpon it, but vanisheth away. And thus fareth it with these other two the first and second Sons: but the third Sonne being contrary vnto the other in profession and practise of life & manners, be he Magistrate or meane person, the bone of such a person will ever be firme of faith in himselfe and towards others, from such a mans bone the blood of lively fruits, to himselfe and all others profitable, will never bee washed away with the water of wretchednesse. But the more it is dyed in the Sonne of true tryall, the better it is. Such are the true children of God, of whom our Lord speaketh thus; yee which have forsaken all things for me, all, that is, yee that have forsaken the will of sinne, shall receive an hundred times more, that is, yee shall not only re-

ceive

ceive the tree of Paradise, but also the heritage of heaven. These other two are bastards, because what they promised in their Baptisme, they wrought all the contrary, through their wicked living. And therefore hee that desireth to obtaine the ioyes of heaven, must abide stedfastly in the profession and practise of good life & manners, and then by Christ hee shall obtaine the tree of Paradise. To which bring us, who liveth & raigneth for ever. Amen.

The Argument.

God so loved sinfull man, that hee sent his onely begotten Sonne to redeeme him out of the captivitie of the world, to rest with him in the joyes of heaven.

The third Historie.

IN Rome there dwelt some time a noble Emperour named Diocletian, who loved exceedingly the vertue of Charitie. Wherefore hee desired greatly to know what Fowle loved her Bird best, to the intent that hee might thereby grow to more perfect Charitie. It fortuned upon a day, that the Emperour rode to a Forrest to take his disport, whereas hee found the nest of a great Bird (called in Latine

Struchio Cameli, in English an Ostridge) with her young, the which young Bird the Emperour tooke with him and closed her in a vessell of glasse. The Dam of this little Bird followed unto the Emperours Pallace, and flew into the Hall where her young one was. But when shee saw her yong, and could not come to her, nor get her out, she returned againe to the forrest, and abode there three dayes, and at the last shee came againe to the Pallace, bearing in her mouth a Worme called Thumare: and when shee came where her young one was, she let the worme fall upon the glasse, by vertue of which worme the glasse brake, and the young one flew forth with her dam. When the Emperour saw this, he praised much the Dam of the Bird which laboured so diligently to deliver her young.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour is the Father of Heaven, which greatly loveth them that live in perfect love and charity: This little bird taken from the forrest, & closed in the glasse, was Adam our forefather, which was exiled out of Paradise, & put into the glasse, that is, hell. This hearing

ring the dam of the bird, that is, the Son of God, hee descended from heaven, unto the forrest of the World and lived there three dayes, bearing with him a worme that is, manhood, according to the Psalmist, I am a worme & no man. This man was slaine among the Jewes, of whose blood the vessell eternall was broken, and the Bird went out, that is, Adam went forth with his mother the sonne of God and flew to heaven.

The Argument.

A cleane spirit and undefiled soule is the Daughter of God, so deare unto him that hee bestowes her not upon the rich man wanting wisedome, but upon the poore man that is wise and liveth in his feare, which if shee have at any time transgrest by frailty of flesh, then seeketh shee for recovery for her health by the medicine of amendment of life: such a soule shall be espoused to Christ, and live with him in the world to come everlastingly.

The fourth History

SOmetime dwelled in Rome a worthy Emperour and a wise, which had a

faire daughter and gracious in the ſight of every man. This Emperour bethought him on a day, to whom hee might give his daughter in marriage, reaſoning thus: If I give my daughter to a rich man, and hée bée a fole, then is ſhe loſt, but if I give her to a poore man and a wiſe, then may he get his living by his wiſdome.

There was at that time dwelling in the Citie of Rome, a Philoſopher named Socrates, poore, and wiſe, which came to the Emperour and ſaid: My Lord, be not diſpleaſed though I put forth my petition before your Highneſſe. The Emperour ſaid: ſpeake on, Then ſaid Socrates: My Lord, yée have a daughter whom I deſire above all things. The Emperour anſwered and ſaid: My friend, I ſhall give thée my daughter to wife upon this condition, that if ſhee die in thy fellowſhip after that ſhe is eſpouſed to thee, thou ſhalt without doubt loſe thy head, Then ſaid Socrates, upon this condition I will gladly take her to my wife. The Emperour hearing this, called all the Lords & States of his Empire, and made a great feaſt at their wedding. And after the feaſt Socrates led home his wife to his owne houſe, where they lived in peace and health long time. But

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at the last this Emperours daughter sickned to death. When Socrates perceived this, he said to himselfe. Alas and woe is me, what shall I doe, and whither shall I flie, if the Emperours daughter that is my wife should die, And for sorrow this Socrates went to a forrest there beside and wept bitterly.

Then while hee thus wept and mourned, there came an aged man having a staffe in his hand, and asked him why hee mourned. Socrates answered and said: I espoused the Emperours daughter upon this condition, that if shee dye in my fellowship, I should lose my life, now shee is sickned to the death, and I can finde no remedy nor help, and therefore I mourne. Then said the old man: Be of good comfort, for I shall help you if ye will doe after my councell. In this forrest bee three hearbes, if you make a drinke of the first for your wife, and of the other two a plaister, and if ye use this medicinal drink and plaister in due time, without doubt shee shall recover her pertect health. Socrates did all that the old man had taught him. And when his wife had used a while that medicinall drinke and plaister, within short time shee was perfectly whole of all

her ſickneſſe. And when the Emperour heard that Socrates had ſo recovered his wife, he promoted him to great honour.

The Morall.

Deare friends, the Emperour is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, his Daughter ſo faire and ſo gracious is the ſoule, made to the ſimilitude of God, which is full glorious in the ſight of him & of his Angels, while that ſhee is not defiled, but abideth in her own proper cleanneſſe. This ſoule God would not give it to a rich man, but to a poore that is, a man that is made of the ſlime of the earth.

This Socrates is a poore man, for why? every man commeth poore and naked into this world from his mothers belly, and every man takes his ſoule in wedlocke upon ſuch condition, that if ſhe dye in his fellowſhip by deadly ſinne, without doubt he ſhal loſe eternal life. Therefore O thou man, if thy wife ſicken through frailty of fleſh, unto ſin, doe then as Socrates did, goe unto the foreſt, that is, the Church of Chriſt, & thou ſhalt finde there an old man with a ſtaffe, that is, a diſcreet Preacher, which ſhall miniſter unto thee theſe three hearbs, whereof may bee conſected the medicine

dicine of thy recovery unto health. The first hearb is acknowledging of sinne: the second is Repentance: and the third is, newnesse of life according to the will of God, If these hearbes bee used in plaister, the sinner without doubt shall receive his health, and his soule shall bee delivered from sinne, and assuredly hee shall have everlasting life. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus.

The Argument.

Many fooliſh Idiots of the world, which flow in abundance of the worldy wealth and pompe, thinking they ſhall live here alwayes, are laboured unto, by the preachers of Gods Word, and admoniſhed of their momentarie felicities, and to prepare themſelves in beſtowing well their ſhort time here, to enjoy the bleſſings of everlaſting felicitie in the world to come.

The fift Hiſtory.

SOmetime there raigned in Rome a mighty Emperour and a wiſe, named Fredericke, who had one onely Sonne whom he loved much. This Emperour when he lay at point of death, called unto

him his sonne, and said, Deare sonne, I have a ball of gold which I charge thee on my blessing that thou anon after my death shalt give to the veriest fole thou canst finde. Then said his son: My Lord, without doubt your will shall be fulfilled. Anon this young Lord after the death of his father, went and sought many realmes, and found many wretches foles, but because hee would satisfie his fathers will hee sought till hee came to a realm where the law was such, that every yeare a new King was chosen, who had the ruling of the realme for one yeare onely, and at the yeares end hee was deposed, and exiled into an Iland, where he finished his life.

When the Emperours sonne came to this realm the new King was chosen with great honour, and brought unto his Regall seate with much musicke and great reverence. And when the Emperours son saw that, hee came unto him, and saluted him reverendly, saying: My Lord, loe I give unto you this ball of gold on my fathers behalfe. Then said hee, I pray thee tell mee the cause why thou givest mee this Ball. Then answered hee, and said: My father charged mee on his death bed, that I should give this ball to the most

fole

fole that I could finde: wherefore I have sought many Realmes, and have found many foles, but a more fole then thou I never found: for it is not unknowne to thee that thou shalt raigne but a yeare, & at the yeares end thou shalt be exiled into such a place whereas thou shalt die a miserable death, wherefore I hold thee for the most fole that ever I found, for as much as for the Lordship of a yeare thou wilt so wilfully lose thy selfe: and therefore I give the this ball. Then said the King, without doubt thou saiest truly, and therefore while I am now in full power of this Realme, I will send before me great treasure, wherewith I may sustaine my selfe from a miserable death, when I shall bee exiled and put downe. And so this was done: and at the yeares end when hee was exiled, hee lived there in peace, and dyed after a good death.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour is the Father of Heaven, the which bequeathed the ball, that is, worldly riches to foles and ideots, who savour nothing but that is earthly. This Emperours Sonne is a Preacher or discreet Minister, that travel-

leth

leth about to many Realmes and Lands, to ſhew unbeléeving men and fooles their perill. The Realme wherein no King might raigne but a yeare, is the worlde. For who ſo liveth and hundred yeares, when hée dyeth he ſhall ſeeme to have lived but the ſpace of an houre: therfore do as the King did while ye be in power of life, ſend before you your treaſure, that is, firme faith in Chriſts merits, & the fruits of Gods word proceéding from the ſame. Then certainly when we bee exiled out of this worlde, we ſhall live in peace, and ſhall find the mercy of God plentifully, whereby wée ſhall obtaine eternall life. Unto which bring us he that for us ſhed his precious bloud.

The Argument.

The evill diſpoſed men of this world are here advertiſed of their greedy griping after the ſweet temptations of the divell, wherein ſuch doe rejoyce till death commeth ſodainely upon them, and then they fall into the horrible pit of deſolate darkeneſſe due to their deſerts.

The ſixt Hiſtory.

Diocleſian raigned in the city of Rome in whoſe Empire dwelt a noble Philoſopher

losopher, who by his Art set up an Image in the middest of the City of Rome, which Image stretched out his arme, and his foremost finger, whereupon stood this Posey written in Latine: *Percute hic*, Strike here. This Image after the death of the Philosopher, stood along time, and many great Clarkes came for to read the superscription that was on the finger, but none understood it; wherfore the people wondred much. At last, a long time after, ther came a strange Clarke out of a farre Country, and when he saw the Image hee read the superscription, Strike here. And then upon a day when hee saw the shadow of the hand, hee tooke a mattocke, and broke up the ground under the hand where the shadow was, according to the understanding of the superscription, and anon hee found an house all of Marble underneath the ground, wherein he found so much riches, so many Jewels, and so great marbels, as hee never saw before. And at the last hee saw a table ready covered, and all manner of things necessary thereto set thereupon. He further beheld, and saw a Carbuncle in the hall that lighted all the house. And against this Carbuncle on the other side,

stood

ſtood a man holding a bow in his hand, and an arrow ready to ſhoot. The Clarke marvelled much when hee ſaw all theſe things, and thought in himſelfe, if that I tell this forth, there will no man beleeve me, and therefore I will have ſomwhat of theſe goods in token thereof. And with that he ſaw a knife of gold upon the table, the which hee tooke and would have put in his boſome, but anon the Archer ſmote the Carbuncle & brake it, wherewith the whole houſe was ſhadowed and made darke, and when the Clarke perceived it he wept moſt bitterly, for he knew no way to get out, for as much as the houſe was made darke through the breaking of the Carbuncle. And that darkneſſe abode ſtill for ever after. And ſo finiſhed the Clarke his life there in that darkneſſe.

The Morall.

Weare friends, this Image thus ſtanding is the Divell, which ſaith evermore, Strike here, that is, ſeek after earthly riches, and not for heavenly treaſure. This Clarke that digged with the mattocke, betokeneth the worldly wiſe men of this world, as ſome evill diſpoſed pleaders of the law, craftie Attornies, and other wicked

ked worldlings, that be ever smiting, what by right, and what by wrong, so that they may get the vanities of the world: and in their smiting they finde great wonders, that is, they finde therein the delights of the world, wherein many men reioyce. The Carbuncle that giveth light is the youth of man which giveth hardinesse to take their pleasure in worldly riches. The Archer with his arrow is Death, which layes watch against man to slay him. The Clarke that toke up the knife, is every worldly man that coveteth ever to have all things at his will. Death smiteth the carbuncle, that is, the youth, strength, and power of man, and then lyeth he wrapped in darknesse of sinne, in which darknesse oftentimes hee dyeth. Therefore studie wee to flye the world and her vaine delights, and then wee shall be sure to win everlasting life, unto which Christ Jesus bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

Wee are here generally put in minde, that the devill besieging the world, our champion Christ Iesus is ready to take our quarrell in hand, who defending and saving us from the invasion and circumvention

vention of Sathan, is yet accurſed for us as a tranſgreſſor, and is content to ſuffer death for our full juſtification.

The ſeaventh Hiſtory.

IN Rome dwelt ſometime a mighty Emperour named Titus, who ordained in his dayes ſuch a Law, that what Knight dyed in his Empire ſhould bee buried in his armour, and whoſoever preſumed to ſpoyle any Knight of his armour after hee was dead, ſhould dye without any gainesaying. It befell after within few yeares that a Citie of the Empire was beſieged of the Emperours enemies, and was in danger of loſing, for none that were in the Citie could defend themſelves by any manner of policie, wherefore great ſorrow and lamentation was made throughout the City.

But at laſt, within few dayes, there came to the Citie a young Knight, welfavoured, and valiant in feates of armes, whom the worthy men of the City beholding and underſtanding his proweſſe, cryed to with one voyce: O thou moſt noble Knight, we beſeech thee to helpe us now at our moſt neede, for you may ſee this City is like to bee loſt. Then hee anſwered and ſaid

said: Sirs, ye see I have no armour, but if I had, I would defend your Citie.

This hearing a mighty man of the Citie, he said to him secretly, Sir, here lived sometime a valiant Knight, who now is dead, and buried within the Citie, and if it please you to take his armour, yee may defend this Citie, and deliver us from perill, and that will be honour unto you, and profit unto the Citie.

The young Knight hearing this, went to the grave and arrayed himselfe with the armour, and after much fight obtayned the victory and delivered the Citie. Which done he laid the armour againe in the grave. But there were some men of the Citie who envied him because hee had obtained the victory, and accused him to the Judge, saying thus: Sir, a law was made by the Emperour, that whosoever dispoyled any dead Knight of his armour should dye. This young Knight found a dead Knight, and tooke away his armour, therefore I beseech thee, that thou proceed in the law against him with equitie and justice, in giving him severe punishment for so offending the Law. When the Justice heard this, hee made the Knight to be taken: and when hee was examined of

this

this his treſpaſſe againſt the Law, hée ſaid thus: Sir, it is written in the Law, that of two harmes the leaſt is to bee choſen. It is not unknowne to you that this Citie was in perill to bée loſt, and had I not taken this armour, I had neither ſaved you nor the Citie, therefore mée thinkes you ought rather to honour mee for this good déede that I have done, then thus ſhamefully to reproove me: for I am led as hée that is ready to be hanged. Alſo good Sirs, another thing I may alledge for my excuſe hée that ſtealeth or robbeth violently, purpoſeth not to reſtore the thing which hee ſtealeth, but it is not thus with mee, for though I tooke the armour of the dead Knight for your defence & ſafegard, when I had obtained the victory, I bare it againe to the ſame place, and to the dead Knight that is his by the Law.

Then ſaid the Juſtice, a Théefe that breaketh a houſe that hée may ſteale and beare a way ſuch as he can finde, although hee bring againe that hee hath taken, I aſke of thée if that the breaking of the houſe be lawfull or not? The Knight anſwered, ſometime the breaking of the houſe may bee good, whereas it is made in a feeble place, which would cauſe the maſter of the houſe

house to make his wall stronger, that the thæves after brake not by force the wals so lightly, for avoyding of more harme.

Then said the Justice, if the breaking of the house be good, nevertheless, in that breaking violence is done to the Lord of the house. And so, though thou didst restore the armour of the dead Knight, nevertheless thou didst wrong to the dead Knight in taking away his armour. The Knight said I have told you, that of two harmes the least is to be chosen: and that harme where through great goodnesse commeth, ought not to be called harme, but it should rather be called good. For if an house within the City were on fire, & began to burne, it were better that thræ or foure houses there by should be throwne to the ground, then that they should bee set on fire also, whereby all the City should bee burned: right so, if the Armour of the dead Knight had not been taken, the City had bæn lost.

And when the Judge heard that he answered so well and so reasonably, he could give no judgement against him. But they who had accused this Knight, slew him: for whose death there was great weeping throughout all the City, and his body was honourably buried in a new Tombe.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is the Father of Heaven, and this Citie is the world, which is beſieged of the Devill and deadly Sin, and as many as were within the Citie, were all in perill to be loſt. This young Knight that came to the Citie, is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who had not the armour of humanity, till hée went to the Grave, that is, the wombe of the glorious Virgin Mary, by the Annunciation of the Angell, ſaying: The holy Ghoſt ſhall light on thee, &c. Loe, thou ſhalt conceive and beare a Sonne. And thus in the Wombe of the Virgin he toke the armour of the dead Knight, that is, the manhood of Adam our forefather, and ſaved the Citie, that is, the World and Mankind by his bleſſed Paſſion that hée ſuffered on the Croſſe, and he put the Armour againe into the Grave, when his bleſſed Body was buried, but the Citizens envied him, that is, the Jewes accuſed him to Pilate, ſaying: If thou ſuffer him thus, thou art not Cæſars friend: wee have a law, and after the law he ought to dye, Iohn 19. 12. And thus our Lord Jeſus Chriſt of his Enemies was condemned to the death of the Croſſe, and af-

ter

ter ascended up to Heaven, whither hee bring us all. Amen,

The Argument.

The fornication of wicked worldly men is here detected. By the providence of God and by his gracious favour the sinner is delivered out of the thraldome of sinne, unto the liberty of life everlasting.

The eight History.

THere raigned sometime in Rome a mighty Emperour and a wise, named Berolde, who ordained a Law, that what woman was taken in adultery, her husband being alive, shee should be cast into perpetuall Prison. There was that time a Knight that had a faire Lady to his wife, who committed adultery her husband being alive, and was with childe, therefore by the Law shee was put in Prison, where in short time shee was delivered of a faire Sonne. The Child grew up till hee was seven yeeres olde, and his mother daily wept bitterly: which when the Childe heard, he said to her O Mother, why weepe yee thus? and for what cause are you thus perplexed? Then said his Mother: O my sweet Son, I have great cause to mourne,

and thou alſo, for above our heads are people walking, and the Sunne ſhineth in clearneſſe, and wée be here continually in ſuch darkneſſe, that I can neither ſée thée, nor thou mée. Alas that ever I conceived thée. Then ſaid the Son, ſuch joy as you ſpeak I never ſaw, for I was borne here in this darkneſſe, therefore if I had meat and drinke enough, I would live here all my life: therefore Mother wéepe not, but be chearfull. This lamentation that was betwéen the Mother and the Son the Emperours Steward heard, that ſtood above their heads, whereof he had great compaſſion, and went to the Emperour, & kneeling beſought him of his Grace, that the Mother and the ſonne might bée delivered out of Priſon. The Emperour as a mercifull Lord granted that they ſhould be delivered. Nevertheleſſe, if they treſpaſſed ſo in time to come, they ſhall be puniſhed with double paine. And after ſhe was delivered ſhe lived joyfully.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is the father of heaven that made this Law, that what married women, that is, what ſoule that is eſpouſed to the Lord, and doth commit

mit adultery, that is, doth worship strange Gods, should be cast into the prison of hell, therefore the sinfull soule hath great cause to wæpe, for shée is debarred from light, that is, from the joyes of Heaven. Her Sonne that desired meate and drinke, are the wealthy wicked Worldlings, that say to the Preachers that preach unto them the joyes of Heaven, that while wæ may live and have all the solace of the world we desire no other Heaven. The steward that heard their lamentation is the Lord Jesus, who knowing all the pitties of our sorrowfull and repentant hearts for our sins, besought the Father of Heaven for us, that wæ might bée delivered from the prison of sinne, and so come to everlasting life. Unto which he bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

Christ proclaimeth the joyfull feast of heaven, whereto the lame, that is, the poore Preachers of the Gospell, having their sight or knowledge in Gods word supported by the blinde Laytie, and each mutually comforting other, they approach unto the proclaimed feast of perpetuall felicity.

The ninth Hiſtory.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt an Emperour named Pompey, who above all other things was merciſull. This Emperour proclaimed throughout all his Empire a great Feaſt, and that poore and rich ſhould come to the feaſt: and whoſoever came to that feaſt ſhould not onely be well fed, but alſo he ſhould have great gifts.

When the Herauld had warned all manner of men to come to this feaſt, at that time there were two poore men lying by the way, the one being lame, and the other blind, Alas, ſaid the one of theſe men to the other, woe to us both, how ſhall we doe? for the Emperour hath proclaimed a feaſt, and whoſoever commeth thither, ſhall not onely be well fed, but alſo ſhall have great gifts, & I am blind, and thou art lame, how ſhall wee doe? Then ſaid the lame man to the blinde man, I ſhall give thee good counſell, if thou wilt doe after mee, I am lame and feeble, & may not goe, nevertheleſſe I can ſee, and thou art blind but ſtrong: take thou mee upon thy backe & beare me, & I ſhall direct thee the right way, & thus wee ſhall both come to the Emperours feaſt. Then ſaid the blinde man, let it bee ſo, get thou on my

backe

back, and I shall beare thée, and guide thou mée, and so they did, and came both to the feast, and received great rewards: and after ended their lives in peace.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is our Saviour Jesus Christ, that proclaimeth a Feast, that is the joyes of heaven, unto the which joyes hée calleth all Mankinde, and forsaketh no man that will come unto him. This lame man betokeneth the poore Ministers of the Gospell, which wanting worldly wealth, live by the Providence of God. And this blinde man betokeneth the Lay-men who know not the right way to Heaven. It behoveth the blind man, that is, the Lay-men to beare the lame man, that is, the Ministers of the Gospell, sustaining and féeding them with the duties of the Church: and the Ministers in Gods cause are bound to teach and to informe us in the way to Heaven, whereas wé shall not onely have a feast, but also great reward and joy. Unto which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

Heaven and Hell are here compared to

two Cities, to these Cities are two contrary wayes: to heaven (which is the City of all heavenly treasure and felicity) is a narrow, crooked, craggy, and painefull way, having three enemies, the Divell, the World, and the Flesh. To Hell (being the City or sinke of sorrow and sadnesse) a faire way, broad, plaine and easie, having three guides, that is, Pride of life, Coveteousnesse of the eyes, and Concupiscence of the flesh.

The tenth History.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt an Emperour named Folliculus, who was very wise & mercifull in all his workes. This Emperour builded in the East a Noble Citie, wherein hee put all his treasure to bee kept. Unto this City the way was stony, full of Brambles and sharp Thornes, and three Knights were armed ready to fight with them that would come to that City. Therefore the Emperour ordained that whosoever overcame these Knights, should enter the City, and take at his will of the Emperours treasure. After that, this Emperour did make in the North a City, wherein hee ordained all manner of paine, sorrow, and tormenting for malefactors,

factors, to which was a broad way very delectable, growing full of Roses and faire Lillies, & in their way were three Knights ever waiting, if any men came towards the City of their North, to serve him with all manner of delicates & necessary provision. And if it fortuned that any man did enter within that City, the custome was such, that the people would binde him hand and foote, and cast him into prison, there to abide the sentence of the Judge.

When this was cryed throughout all the Empire, there were two Knights dwelling in one City, one named Ionathas, who was a wiseman: the other called Pirrhus, who was a Foole; nevertheless there had continued betwéene them great love. This Ionathas said to Pirrhus, deare friend, there is a common cry made throughout all lands, that the Emperour hath made a City in the East, wherein he hath put his treasure, and whosoever may enter that City, shall take what hée will of the treasure, therefore let us goe thither. Then said Pirrhus thy Counsell is good. let us goe. The wise Knight said, if it bée so that thou wilt follow my counsell, I pray thée that faithfull friendship may

continue

continue betweene us and in token of loue thou ſhalt drinke my blood, and I will drinke thine, on this condition, that neither of us leaue other in this journey. The foolish knight ſaid, it pleaſeth mee right well, wherefore they were both let blood, and each of them dranke others blood. When this was done, they went forth together on their journey, and when they had gone three daies journey toward the City where their treaſure was, they came to a place where were two wayes, one ſharpe and ſtony, and full of thornes, the other was faire plaine and full of delights. Then ſaid the wiſe knight to this fellow: deare Friend, here are two waies, one ſharpe & thorny, neverthelesſe if wee goe this way, we ſhall come to the City that is ſo rich, & there we ſhall have that we deſire. Then ſaid the foolish knight to his fellow, I wonder greatly at you, that you will ſpeake ſuch things, for I will rather beleeve mine eyes then your words. I ſee here openly, & ſo doe you, that here is a hard way & full of thornes, & as I have heard, there bee three Champions, armed in this way ready to fight againſt all men that goe towards the City of the Eaſt, & therefore I will not goe that way

but

but here is (as you may see) another way, plaine, and easie to walke in, and in this way there are three Knights ready to serve us, & give us all manner of things delightfull for us: and therefore by this way will I goe, and not by that other way. Then said the wise Knight certainely if we goe by that way, we shall be led into the City of the North, wherein there is no mercy, but perpetuall paine and sorrow. & there we shall be taken and bound and cast into prison. Certainely said the foolish Knight this way is the ready way, and as I beleeve, it is more profitable then the other way. Then went they both forth the faire way, & anon three Knights met with them, which received them courteously for one night, and gave them all manner of things that were pleasant to them. And on the morrow they tooke their journey forth toward the City, & when they were within the City, anon the Emperors officers met with them, and said: Friends, why come ye hither, insomuch that ye know the law of this city is so cruel of long time heretofore: surely, ye shall be served now after the law. Anon they tooke the wise Knight, and brought him, and put him into prison, and after that they tooke the foolish

Knight

knight, and bound him fast, and cast him into a Ditch. Soone after it befell that the Justice came to the City to give judgement on them that had trespassed the law, and anon all the prisoners were brought forth before the Justice, among whom these two knights were brought forth, one from prison, & the other from the ditch. Then said the wise knight to the Justice: My reverend Lord, I complaine of my fellow that is guilty of my death: for when we two came to the two wayes, whereof the one led to the City of the Cast, and the other to this City, I told him all the perill of this City, and the reward of that other City, but hee would not beléeve mée, but said to mée in this wise: I will beléeve mine owne eyes better then thy words, & because hée was my fellow I would not let him goe alone in this way: and thus came I with him, wherfore he is the cause of my death. Then said the foolish knight, I complaine that hée is the cause of my death: for it is not unknowne to you all, that I am a Foole, & hée a wiseman, and therefore hée should not so lightly have followed my folly, for if he had forsaken this way, I should have followed him. & therefore he is cause of my death. Then said the

Justice

Justice to thy wise Knight, because that thou with all thy wisdome, so lightly consentedst & followedst the will of the foole, & his foolish works: and thou Foole because thou didst reject the good counsell, and advice of the wise, & wouldst not beleeve him, I give judgement, that ye both be hanged for your trespasse: and so it was done. Wherefore all men praysed greatly the Judge for his discreet judgement.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is Almighty God, & in the East is the Cite of heaven, wherein is treasure infinite: And unto this way is a hard way and full of Thornes, that is, the way of Repentance, by which way full few walke: for it is hard and straight, according to the holy Scripture, saying thus. Arcta est via quæ ducit ad vitam: It is a straight way that leadeth to everlasting life.

In this way are three armed Knights, that is, the Devill, the World, & the Flesh. with whom it behoveth us to fight, and to obtaine the victory, before wee may come to Heaven. The second City that is in the North is Hell: & to this accordeth the Scripture, saying thus: Ab aquilone pa-

neur omne malum: Out of the North commeth all evill. Certainly to this City the way is plaine and broad, and walled about on every side with all manner of delights, wherefore many men walke by this way. The three Knights that give to every man going this way what thing them pleaseth, are these, Pride of life, Covetousnesse of the eyes, and Concupiscence of the flesh: in which three the wretched man greatly delighteth, and at the last they led him to Hell. This witty Knight betokeneth the soule, & the foolish Knight betokeneth the flesh, which is alway foolish; and at all times ready to doe evill. These two are fellowes and knit in one: for either of them drinke others bloud, that is, they shall drinke of one cup, either of joy or paine which they shall have after the day of Dome.

The Soule chooseth the way of Repentance, and in as much as shee may, shee stirreth the flesh to doe the same. But the flesh never thinketh what shall come after, and therefore shee goeth on in the delights of this World, & flieth the vertue of Repentance. And thus the soule after death is cast into Hell, and the flesh is cast into the ditch, that is into the grave. But when

the

the Judge commeth, that is our Lord Jesus Christ at the last day to iudge all mankinde. Then the Soule shall complaine upon the flesh, and the flesh upon the soule. But then the Judge that cannot be deceived shall condemne the Soule, because she followed the frailty of the flesh, and the flesh because it would not beleeve the soule. Wherefore let us study to tame our flesh that we may obey God; and then we shall have eternall life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soule of Man being possessed of the Princely Teritorie of Paradise, was by the Devill provoked to sin against hee Creator, and for the same transgression (being thence into the wide World exiled) lost that her heritage: but by Christs blessed Death and Passion was restored unto a more happy heritage of everlasting felicity.

The eleventh History.

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperour named Frederick, which had no Childe, but one onely daughter

Daughter to whom this Emperour after his deceaſe bequeathed all his Empire. This underſtanding an Earle that dwelt there beſide, he came to this young Lady and wooed her, and prevoked her to ſinne all that hée might: whereby this young Lady in ſhort proceſſe of time inclined to the Earle, and this Earle anon lay with her and defiled her: and after that hee drave her from her heritage, and exiled her out of the Empire, wherefore ſhée made great lamentation, and fled unto a Realme there beſide, where ſhe daily wept and mourned.

It befell after on a day, that while ſhée ſate mourning by the high way ſide, there came riding by her a faire young Knight upon a Horſe, and came towards her a great pace, and very courteouſly ſaluted her, aſking her the cauſe why ſhee mourned ſo ſore. Then anſwered ſhee and ſaid: my reverend Lord, I am an Emperours daughter, deſcended of royall blood, my father is dead, who left me all his Empire, becauſe he had no other heire. And after his deceaſe an Earle there beſide deceived me, defloured my virginity, and after that he put me violently out of my heritage, ſo that I now am faine to begge me bread

from

from doore to doore, and this is the cause of my sorrow. Then said the Knight: faire Damsell, I have great compassion on thy beautie and thy comelinesse: therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I will fight for thee against the Earle, and I will assure thee the victory. Then said shee, alas good sir, I have nothing that I may give unto you but my selfe. And I aske no more of thee said the Knight, but that thou wouldest be my wife, and love no man so much as me. Then said shee: Reverend sir, that I will doe gladly, and more if I might. Then said the Knight: I will that you doe nothing for me, but if it fortune me to die in the fight for thee, and obtaine the victorie, thou shalt take my bloudy shirt, and hang it upon a beame in thy Chamber: and this thou shalt doe for two causes. The first is, that whensoever thou beholdest the shirt, thou shalt weep for me. The second is, that whatsoever man come to woe thee to be his wife, thou shalt then hastily runne unto thy Chamber, and there beholding my bloudy shirt, think heartily within thy selfe thus.

The Lord of this shirt dyed for my love in battaile, by which hee recovered my heritage. God forbid that I should take any

other man after his death. Then ſaid ſhé, Reverend ſir, all this I ſhall fulfill by the grace of God. And when the Knight heard this, hé aſſayed to fight againſt the ſaid Earle, and obtained the victory, and the Earle was overcome, and fled, and this young Lady was brought and received againe into her heritage. Neverthelesſe the Knight was deadly wounded in that battell, whereof he died: but ere hé dyed hé bequeathed his bloudy ſhirt unto this Damſell, deſiring her to kéep her promiſe. When this young Lady heard of his death ſhe wept ſore, for in his ſhirt was wrought this:

Thinke on me, and have in minde
Him, that to thee was ſo kinde.

Anon when ſhé had received this ſhirt ſhé hanged it upon a beame in her chamber, and as oft as ſhe beheld it, ſhé wept bitterly. It befell not long after, that the States of the Empire came to her, and deſired her to take an husband: but then ſhé went to her chamber, and beheld the bloudy ſhirt, and waxed ſorrowfull, and ſaid oftentimes woe and alas, thou ſuffereddſt death for my love, and thou alſo recovereddſt againe my heritage: God forbid that I ſhould take any other man but thé. And

thus

thus she answered every man that came to her: and so they went away disappointed of their purpose, and she ended her life in rest.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is the Father of heaven, and his daughter is the Soule of Man, made to the similitude of God: to whom hee gave and bequeathed the Empire of Paradise. But there came the Earle, that is, the Devill, and provoked her to sinne, when she eat of the Apple, and said to her thus: In what houre yee eat of this Apple ye shall be like Gods. Wherefore wee breaking Gods commandement were exiled out of Paradise, to live in this world in great wretchednesse, as the Scripture saith: In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread. But then came a faire young Knight, and a strong, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, who had compassion upon Mankind, and taking upon him our flesh and blood, gave battell to the Devill, and overcame him: and thus wan he again our heritage. Therefore let us do as this yong Lady did, let us lay this bloody shirt, that is, the remembrance of the Passion of Christ, on the beame of our hearts, let us

think how our Lord Jeſus ſhed his pretious bloud for us. And if any man, that is, if the Devill, or any other would ſtirre us to ſinne, let us think preſently on the Paſſion of Chriſt, ſaying thus: I will take none other but thee, who haſt ſhed thy bloud for mee: and thus ſhall wee winne everlaſting life. Unto which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

We are here generally advertiſed of honouring the Sabbath day: how, for the redeeming of time, to be occupied in ghoſtly contemplation, is profitable to the ſoule and body. Alſo Preachers of Gods Word oftentimes for ſaying truth purchaſe ill will. If we beſtow our talents in the amplifying of Faith, and furthering one of another with good works, we ſhall then inherit the fruition of eternall life prepared for Chriſts Elect.

The twelfth Hiſtory

SOmetimes dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Apollinus, which ordained a Law that every man upon paine of death ſhould celebrate the day of his nativity. This Emperour called to him a

Clark

Clark that was hight Virgil, and said: My deare Master, there be many haynous offences done in my Empire contrary to the Law, therefore I pray thee that thou by thy cunning wouldst make some craft whereby I may know who trespasseth against the Law privily or openly. Then said Virgil, My reverend Lord, your will shall be done. Anon this Virgil through his craft made an Image in the midst of the Citie of Rome, which denounced and told the Emperours messengers who trespassed against the Law, & who not. There was at that time dwelling in the Citie of Rome, a Smith that hight Focus, which by no meanes would celebrate the Nativitie of the Emperour. It befell upon a night, as the Smith lay in his bed, hee thought upon the Image that accused many men before, dreading least the Image would accuse him, wherefore hee arose and went to the Image, and said, I make a vow to God if thou accuse mee, I shall breake thy head: and when he had thus said hee went home. The Emperour on the morrow following, sent messengers to the Image (as before-time hee was accustomed) to know and understand who had trespassed against the Law. And to them then said the

Image lift up your eyes and behold what is ingraven in my fore-head. And when they looked up, they saw this posey written. Times be changed, and men become worse and worse. For hee that will say the truth, shall have his head broken. Therefore goe yée forth to your Lord, and tell him all that yée have heard and seene. The messengers went forth and told the Emperour all they had heard and seene.

Then said the Emperour, arme your selves and goe to the Image, and if that you finde any man that hath menaced or threatned to hurt the Image, bind him hand and foot, and bring him unto mee. Then went the messengers forth to the Image, and said to it: tell us the truth if any man have threatned thee, and we shall revenge thee anon. Then said the Image: Take the Smith Focus, for hee is the man that will not honour the Nativitie of the Emperour. Straightway the Messengers led forth the Smith before the Emperour: and there examined him why hee kept not the day of the Emperours Nativity in reverence and honour, according to the Law? Then answered the Smith and said: Reverend Lord, I beseech you that you will heare mine excuse, and if I answer not rea-

reasonably to all manner of points that ye shall ask me. I will yelde me fully to your Grace. Then said the Emperour, I will heare thee, and that which is right, that I will doe.

Then said the Smith, I must have eight pence every day in the week, and that I cannot get without great labour, and therefore I may not keepe that day holy day more than other dayes. Then said the Emperour: why must thou have these eight pence? Then said the Smith: I am bound to pay daily two pence: and two pence I lend: and two pence I lose: and two pence I spend. Then said the Emperour: tell me more expressely of these eight pence. Then said the Smith: I am bound every day to pay two pence to my Father: for when I was young, he spent dayly two pence on me, which I am bound to pay him againe for his sustentation, and two pence I lose on my wife. Then said the Emperour, why losest thou that two pence on thy wife? Then said he: where saw ye ever woman but she had one of these properties: either she was wilfull & contrary to her husband, or hot of complexion: and therefore that I give her I lose. Also two pence I lend to my sonne wherewith he

is ſuſtained, that when I came to age and poverty he may pay me two pence again, like as I doe my Father. Alſo I ſpend two pence on my ſelfe in meat, and drink, and that is little enough. Then ſaid the Emperour, thou haſt anſwered well and wiſely. Not long after the Emperor dyed, and this Smith Focus was choſen to be Emperour, becauſe he ſpent his eight pence ſo wiſely and ſo profitably, and thus he ended his life in peace and reſt.

The Morall

Deare Friends, this Emperour is our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, which ordained by his holy Law that every man ſhould keepe the holy Sabbath day. This Virgil that made this Image, is the holy Ghoſt, who eſtabliſhed among us Preachers to teach vertues and reprove vices, and they ſhould not ſpare the poore nor the rich. But now if a Preacher ſhould ſpeake the truth againſt any man, hee ſhall be threatned by the enemies of Chriſt, that is, by evill men that neither love God nor man. Wherefore the Preacher may ſay now a dayes, that Poſey which was written in the fore-head of the Image, Times be changed from good to ill, and men be daily worſe: for who ſo would

would speak the truth now adayes shall have his head broken. Therefore it is needfull they be armed, that is, Preachers ought to be armed with vertuous examples of good life, and then they need not feare, because they have the truth of God to stand by them according to the Apostles saying: If God be with us, who can be against us.

By this Smith Focus, is understood every good Christian man, who daily should spend his time in redeeming of every houres travell with some profit corporall or spirituall: and then ought hee to be presented before the heavenly Emperour. This Focus paid two pence to his Father, and so wee should pay to our Father of heaven two pence, that is, honour and love. For when we were the children of wretchednesse, and in bondage, Almighty God sent downe to the earth his Sonne to redeeme us, according to S. Iohn the Evangelist, saying: God loved the world so well that he gave his onely begotten Sonne for the salvation of the world. Also this Focus lent two pence to his Sonne: that is, every Christian man ought to lend to the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ true and unfained faith, and fruitfull good workes and deeds in our life, and hee will

repay

repay us againe at the day of doome with his heavenly mercy, when ſoule and body ſhall be glorified. And that he is our brother may be proved by the text of Eſay, ſaying, A child is borne to us. This Focus loſt two pence to his wife: his wife betokeneth the fleſh, upon whom thou loſeſt two pence, that is, unlawfull love and conſent to ſinne, becauſe the fleſh is contrary to the ſpirit, and is ever ſubject to ſinne. This Focus alſo ſpent two pence on himſelfe: by the firſt penny ye ſhall underſtand repentance, whereat the Angells in heaven doe greatly rejoyce: by the ſecond penny ye ſhall underſtand perfect perſeverance in amendment of life: for he that abideth unto the end ſhall be ſaved. And he that ſpendeth well theſe two pence ſhall obtain everlaſting life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jeſus Chriſt Amen.

The Argument.

Man being blind through ſinne, and either by infirmity of fraile fleſh, or ſuggeſtion treſpaſſing with evill and lewd company though God of his mercy be favourable unto him in his life time, by reaſon of the foreſaid reſpect, yet if he accuſtomably walke on forward in this worldly wickedneſſe

nesse his wilfull blindnesse shall not excuse him, but accuse him in the day of judgement, most grievously to have offended God, in abusing his mercie offered, and therefore the lesse worthy to have the reward of the simple soule that repentantly and with modesty liveth to the fruition of everlasting blisse.

The thirteenth History.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt a noble Emperour, which among all other vertues loved best mercie: wherefore he ordained a Law, that every blind man should have an hundred shillings by the yeare of his treasure. It befell on a day that certaine men came to a Taverne to drink wine, and after that those men had sitten in the Taverne three dayes, the fourth day they were greatly in debt for the wine: wherefore the Vintner come to them and demanded mony for his Wine. Then said one of the Drinkers, Sirs, the Emperour hath made such a Law, that every blind man shall have an hundred shillings of his treasure: therefore let us cast lots among us. and to whom the lot falleth, let his eyes be put out, and so he may goe to the Emperors Pallace, and get an hundred shillings to dis-

diſcharge us. Now this counſell liked them well: ſo they caſt lots, and the lot fell on him that gave the counſell, and his fellowes immediatly put out his eyes,

And when hee was blind, hee went to the Emperours Pallace, and aſked an hundred ſhillings of the Steward according to the Emperours decree. Deare Friend, ſaid the Steward, thou didſt ſee with both thine eyes a while ſince, thou alſo underſtandeſt the Law amiſſe: for the Law is made for men that are blind through infirmities, or by the will of God, but the other day thou hadſt thy ſight in the Taverne, and haſt wilfully loſt it. Therefore goe to the Taverne againe to thy fellowes and diſcharge there what thou oweſt, for here getteſt thou not a farthing. Then went this wretched man forth and told his fellowes of the Stewards anſwer, and with that came in the Hintner and diſpoyled them of all their clothes, and beat them, and thus drove them with ſhame out of the Citie: And ſo were they never after ſeen there.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour is our Saviour Chriſt, who ordayned a Law that

that every blind man should have an hundred shillings of his treasure. This blind man betokeneth every Sinner, who sinneth through infirmity, or the entising of the Devill, the World, and the Flesh, and shall receive an hundred shillings, if he be inwardly repentant of his sinnes: that is, he shall have an hundred times more joy, according to the Scripture, saying, Yee shall receive an hundred times more joy if yee repent and turne from sinne, and also yee shall have everlasting life. These men that came to the Taverne to drink Wine, be Sinners, who oftentimes come to the Taverne of our Adversary the Devill, to drink of his carnall appetites, that is, they there consume and waste away all spirituall vertues, which they received when they received the Sacrament of Baptisme. Where the Devill our Enemie dispoyleth them of all their good deeds that ever they have wrought before. They cast lots, that is, they cast among them the custome of sinne, and this lot of sinne falleth on such as are unthankfull and mercilesse: and such a man wilfully becommeth blind, that is, he becommeth wilfully a foule sinner like Judas that betrayed our Lord without any sug-

gestion

gestion or intising. And therefore such men sinne most grievously. When they come before the Steward, that is, before the Prelates of the Church, they can hardly obtaine an assurance of Heaven, because they be not in the right way to leave their sin. Therefore let us study with all diligence to please God, that we may obtaine everlasting life, which is laid up in store for all those that live modestly, looking for eternal salvation. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

A certain vow of love being made betweene the soule of every faithfull Christian and Jesus Christ, we are to consider the mercifull and gracious Covenant of God toward the faithfull, and to be carefull of this Covenant, and we are to study to performe our vow, so as wee at the prefixed day of promise being undefiled, may thereby purchase the promised place of everlasting glory, prepared for all them that seek the glory of God, and their soules health.

The fourteenth History.

IN Rome somtime dwelt a mighty Emperour named Philominus, who had one only

onely Daughter, who was faire and gracious in the sight of every man, who had to name Aglaes. There was also in the Emperours pallace a gentle Knight that loved dearly this Lady. It befell after upon a day, that this Knight talked with this Lady and secretly uttered his desire unto her. Then she said courteously, seeing you have uttered to me the secrets of your heart, I will likewise for your love utter to you the secrets of my heart, and truely I say that above all other I love you best. Then said the Knight I purpose to visite the holy land, and therefore give mee your troth, that this seven yeares you shall take no other man, but only for my love to tarry for mee so long, and if I come not againe by this day seven yeares, then take what man you like best. And likewise I promise you that within this seven yeares I will take no wife. Then said shee this covenant pleaseth mee well. When this was said, each of them was betrothed to other, and then this Knight tooke his leave of the Lady, and went to the holy Land. Shortly after the Emperour treated with the King of Hungary for the marriage of his daughter. Then came the King of Hungary to the Emperours pallace to see

his

his daughter, and when hée had ſéene her, he liked marvellous well her beauty and her behaviour, ſo that the Emperour and the King were accorded in all things as touching the marriage, upon the condition that the Damſell would conſent. Then called the Emperour the young Lady to him, and ſaid: O my faire Daughter, I have provided for thée, that a King ſhall be thy huſband if thou liſt to conſent, therefore tell me what anſwer thou wilt give to this. Then ſaid ſhe to her Father, it pleaſeth me well: but one thing deare Father, I intreat of you if it might pleaſe you to grant me: and this it is, I have vowed to kæpe my virginity, and not to marry this ſeven yeares, therefore deare Father I beſeech you for all the love that is betwæne your gracious Father-hood and mee, that yæ name no man to be my huſband till theſe ſeven yeares be ended, and then I ſhall be ready in all things to fulfill your will. Then ſaid the Emperour, ſith it is ſo that thou haſt thus vowed, I will not break thy vow, but when theſe ſeven years be expired thou ſhalt have the King of Hungary to thy huſband.

Then the Emperour ſent forth his Letters to the King of Hungary, praying

him

him if it might please him to stay seven yeeres for the love of his Daughter, and then he should speed without faile. Herewith the King was pleased, and content to stay the prefix day.

And when the seven yeares were envyslave a day, the young Lady stood in her Chamber window and wept sore, saying: Woe and alas, as to morrow my Love promised to be with mee againe from the Holy Land, and also the King of Hungary to morrow will be here to marry me according to my fathers promise, and if my Love come not at a certaine houre, then am I utterly deceived of the inward love I beare to him.

When the day came the King hasted towards the Emperour with a great earnestnesse to marry his daughter, and was royally arrayed in Purple. And while the King was riding on his way there came a Knight riding by him, to whom he said deare friend, whence art thou, and whence comest thou? The Knight answered and said, I am of the Empire of Rome, and now am lately come from the Holy Land, and I am ready to doe you the best service I can. And as they rode talking by the way, it began to raine so so fast that all

the kings apparell was ſore wet. Then ſaid the Knight: my Lord, ye have done foolishly, for as much as ye brought not with you your houſe. Then ſaid the King, why ſpeakeſt thou ſo? My houſe is large and broad, and made of ſtones and morter, how ſhould I then bring with me my houſe? thou ſpeakeſt like a foole. When this was ſaid, they rode on till they came to a great deep water, and the King ſmote his horſe with his ſpurs and leapt into the water, ſo that hee was almoſt drowned. When the Knight ſaw this, and was over on the other ſide of the water without perill, he ſaid to the King: ye were in perill, and therefore ye did foolishly, becauſe ye brought not with you your Bridge. Then ſaid the King thou ſpeakeſt ſtrangely, my Bridge is made of lime and ſtone, and containeth in quantity more then half a mile, how ſhould I then beare with mee my Bridge? therefore thou ſpeakeſt foolishly. Well ſaid the Knight, my foolishneſſe may turne thee to wiſdome. When the King had ridden a little further, hee asked the Knight what time of day it was. Then ſaid the Knight, if any man hath liſt to eat, it is time of the day to eat, and therefore my reverend Lord, I pray you take a

modicum

modicum with me, for that is no dishonour to you, but great honour to mee before the States of this Empire. Then said the King: I will gladly eat with thee. They sate both downe in a faire Vine Garden, and there dined together, both the King and the Knight. And when dinner was done, and that the King had washed, the Knight said to the King: My Lord, quoth hee, yee have done foolishly, for that yee brought not with you your father and mother. Then said the King, what saist thou? my Father is dead, and my Mother is old and may not travell, how should I then bring them with me? therefore to say the truth, a foolisher man then thou art did I never see. Then said the Knight, every work is praised at the end.

When the Knight had ridden a little further, and was nigh the Emperours Pallace, he asked leave to goe from him, for he knew a nearer way to the Pallace to the young Lady, that he might come first and carry her away with him. Then said the King, I pray thee tell me by what place purposest thou to ride? Then said the Knight, I will tell you the truth: this day seven yeares I left a net in a place, and now I purpose to visit it, and draw it to

me, and if it be whole, then will I take it to me, and keep it as a precious Jewell, but if it be broken then will I leave it: and when he had said thus hee tooke his leave of the King, and rode forth, but the King kept the broad high way.

When the Emperer heard of the Kings comming, hee went towards him with a great company, and royally received him, causing him to shift his wet cloathes, and to put on fresh apparell. And when the Emperour and the King were set at meat, the Emperour welcomed him with all the cheare and solace that hee could. And when he had eaten, the Emperour asked tidings of the King. My Lord, said hee, I shall tell you what I heard this day by the way. There came a knight to mée, and reverently saluted mée: and anon after, there fell a great raine, and greatly spoiled my apparell. And anon the knight said: Sir you have done foolishly, for that you brought not with you your house. Then said the Emperour: what cloathing had the knight on. A cloake, quoth the King. Then said the Emperour, surely that was a wise man, for the house whereof he spake was a cloake, and therefore he said to you that you did foolishly, because you came

without

without your cloake, for if ye had brought with you a cloake, then your cloathes had not beene spoiled with raine. Then said the King, when he had ridden a little further, we came to deepe water, and I smote my horse with my spurres, and I was almost drowned, but he rid thorow the water without any perill: then said he to me, ye did foolishly, for that ye brought not with you your Bridge. Verily, said the Emperour, he saith truth: for he called the Bridge your Squires, that should have ridden before you, and assaid the depnesse of the water. Then said the King, we rode further, and at the last hee prayed mee to dine with him. And when he had dined, he said, I did unwisely, because I brought not with me my Father and Mother. Truly said the Emperor, he was a wise man and said truth: for he called your Father and Mother, bread & wine, and other victuals. Then said the King: we rode further, and anon after hee asked mee leave to go from mee, and I asked earnestly whither hee went. And hee answered againe and said: This day seven yeares I left a net in a private place, and now I will ride to see it, and if it be broken or torne, then will I leave it: but if it be as I left it, then shall

it be unto me right pꝛecious. When the Emperour heard this, he cryed with a loud voyce, and ſaid: O yée my Knights and ſervants, come yee with me ſpédily unto my Daughters Chamber, foꝛ ſurely that is the net of which he ſpake. And foꝛthwith his Knights and ſervants went unto his Daughters Chamber, and found her wet, foꝛ the foꝛeſaid Knight had taken her with him. And thus the King was deceived of the Damſell. And he went home againe to his owne Country aſhamed.

The Morall

Deare Friends, this Emperour is our Loꝛd Jeſus Chꝛiſt, and his faire Daughter is everlaſting life, which the Emperour had ordained foꝛ Kings, Knights, and other men. The Knight that loved this young Lady, is every good Chꝛiſtian ſoule, which holdeth himſelf not woꝛthy to come into the ſight of God unto ſuch joy, as the Apoſtle ſaith, The ſufferings of this time are not worthy to attaine to the glory that is to come. This Knight was ſeven yéres abſent from his love: like as a good Chriſtian all the dayes of his life ſhould labour and travell in fulfilling the ſeven woꝛks of mercy. By the King that came with-

without a cloake in the raine, is to be understood some mighty men of this World which have Clokes to cover all their other clothes. By this Cloke is understood Charity, as the Apostle saith: Charity covers a multitude of sins: but many men have not this Cloke, wherefore they are met with the raine of Pride, Avarice and Lechery. This King also was almost drowned, because he lacked his Bridge, that is, perfect faith: for as we see that no man may passe over a great water, broad and deepe, without a Bridge or some other thing that is able to beare him: Right so, without faith it is impossible to please God: for Christ saith, If ye have faith as a graine of Mustard-seed, then may you say to the hils remove out of your places, and they shall remove. But many of us nowadayes have very feeble faith, and therefore do suddenly fal into the clay of desperation and by deadly sins oftentimes offend God. Also this King had not brought with him his father and his mother. By the Father which is cause of generation, is understood Humility, without which there is no vertue in any man, and therefore accordeth S. Gregory, saying, He that gathereth all other vertues without Humility, is like a man

that casteth dust into the wind. His Mother betokeneth Hope; therefore he that wil obtaine everlasting life, must have the cloak of Charity, the bridge of Faith, and a Father of Meekness, and a Mother of Hope as the Apostle said.

Also this Knight went the narrow way, and the King the broad way: for hee that wil be saved, must go a strait way, that is, the way of Fasting, Almesdeeds, Chastity, and Repentance. Of the which way speaketh the Apostle. The way is strait which leadeth unto everlasting life. But many men goe the other way which leadeth to Hell, that is, by the way of fleshly lust: and such men go out of the way of everlasting life. Therefore study we to walke the narrow way, that thereby we may obtaine everlasting life.

The Argument.

By the History is figured, as appeares in the Morall the soule of every good Christian, held of him as his Daughter: but being seduced, carried away, and defiled by Satan her foule enemie, shee is reduced by the help and valiant prowesse of her heavenly Champion Christ Jesus unto her former Habitation. Yet man being ungrate-

ungratefull to his Redeemer, forgetteth his duty, and for good reward th evill to his Champion Christ Iesus, delivering him to be judged by the Law, as an Offender: but when the Champion avoucheth what he hath done for man and his Soule, then is he with shame of his ingratitude constrained to remorse, and call for grace to repent and amend his life, that by the death of his Champion Christ, he may obtaine eternall life.

The fifteenth History.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a noble Emperour named Agias, which had retained unto him a Knight named Gerard, which was a worthy Warrior, nevertheless he was as meeke as a Lamb in the Emperours Court, but in the field he was like a Lion. This Emperour had a faire Daughter, whom the strong and mightie earle of Pelester caried perforce away, and defiled, which more displeased the Emperour then the carrying of her away. Therefore he called unto him his Councell, and said: Dear Friends, the violence done to me in defloureing of my Daughter, is not unknowne to you, and therefore I purpose to give battell to the Earle; wherefore I

may

pray you to be ready at a day, that ye may proceed with me in battell. And they said: Sir, we be ready to live and die with you in battell.

When the appointed day of battel came they met on both sides, and a cruell sharp conflict was prosecuted on both sides, and almost all that were on the Emperours part were slaine. And as the Emperour himselfe was forcibly assailed, the Knight Gerard put himselfe among the enemies before the Emperour and fought manfully, and so the Emperour escaped, and the Knight abode and slue the Earle, nevertheless the Knight had divers wounds. Notwithstanding this, hee abode still till the blood ran downe to his foot. And when the enemies saw that the Earle was slain, they fled, and the Knight with his people followed on the chase till they came to the place where the Emperours Daughter was, and led her with him. And thus with triumph and victory, he returned againe to the Emperour. For the which victory and re-obtaining of the Emperors Daughter, he was greatly praised of all people. Not long after it befell that this Knight had a suit in the Emperours Court, wherefore the Knight came unto the Emperour and

prayed

prayed him meekly to be favourable to his cause, and furthermore desired him to doe reason touching his honest demand.

When the Emperour had heard him, he called to him a Justice, and said, Sir our will is that you doe all equity unto this Knight. And when the Knight heard this hee cryed with a loud voyce: Alas, alas, who ever heard of such an Emperour, Thou wert (said hee) in battell, where thy head should have beene smitten off, and I in mine own person, (and none other man) put my selfe in jeopardy for thee, and saved thee, and now thou hast assigned another man to be Judge in my cause: Alas that ever thou wert borne, and with that word the Knight put off all his cloathes, and shewed his wounds that he had received in the battell, unto all the men that were there present, and said: Loe, what have I suffered for thee, O Emperour. I did put no other man in my stead, and now thou assignest another man in my cause. Soothly I say to thee that I never served such a Lord before.

When the Emperour heard this, being almost confounded in himselfe, hee said: O dear Friend, all that thou saist is truth, thou savedst me from death, thou diest re-

obtaine

obtaine my Daughter againe, and for my ſake thou haſt ſuffered many wounds: verily it is right, that I in mine own perſon came downe and make an end of thy cauſe, ſo as may be to thy content and to mine honour. And then the Emperour laboured very buſily in his matter, and made thereof an end according to the Knights requeſt: wherefore all men greatly commended the Emperour.

The Morall.

Dear Friends, this Emperour may be called every Chriſtian man, or elſe all mankind, which had a fair Daughter, that is to ſay the ſoule, made to the ſimilitude of God. This Earl betokeneth the Devil, which carrieth away, and deſtroureth by ſinne the ſoule of man, through eating of the fruit of the forbidden træ: wherefore all mankind was in thraldom, till a ſtrong and valiant Knight came and put himſelfe on the Croſſe to ſuffer death, as a Redeemer of mankind from the Devill. For if that had not bæn, wæ had all been partakers of thraldom everlaſtingly: and this Knight reduced and re-obtained the ſoule of man unto the Church, wherefore hæ ſuffered many great wounds in his body.

And

And now this knight, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ hath a matter to doe among us, that is, to finde in us perfect faith: wherefore he calleth daily on us that wee would be ready at all times, saying thus in Apocalypse the 3. Loe I stand and knock at the doore, if any man will open to me, I will come in and sup with him. But many men doe as the Emperour did, the which appointed the knight another Judge then himselfe, for now adayes there be some men that will doe no repentance for the love of him which assigned no other man but himselfe to fight for us. And therefore against unthankfull persons it shall be said thus. Loe he suffered for us on the Crosse, dispoiled of all his clothing, and shewed to us all his wounds that he suffered.

Be we therefore thankfull unto God for all his graces, and bee content that wee may suffer for his love some sorrowfull repentance. For hee that suffereth paine for the love of God in this life, shall receive a hundred times more reward in the life everlasting, Unto the which our Lord Jesus Christ bring all mankinde. Amen.

The

The Argument.

The soule of man is here warned to eschue the pleasant baits and subtill crafts of the Devill, that shee yeeld not to his allurements, lest hee get the vantage of this mortall course from her, and bereave her of her joyes in the life to come.

The sixteenth History:

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a wittie Emperour named Pompey, which had a faire Daughter named Aglas. This Daughter had many vertues above all other women in that Empire. First, shee was faire and gracious in the sight of every man, shee was also swift in running, so that no man might overtake her by a right space. When the Emperour understood these two vertues in his Daughter, he was right joyfull: Wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that what man poore or rich would runne with his Daughter, should have her to wife, with great riches, if hee could over runne her, and came sooner to the marke then she, and if shee over-ran him, and came sooner to the marke then hee, his head should be smitten off.

When

When the States of that Empire, as Dukes, Earles, Barons, and Knights, heard this cry, they offered themselves one after another to run with her, but ever this young Lady over-ran them all, wherefore they lost their heads according to the law. That time there was a poore man dwelling in Rome, which thought within himselfe, I am a poore man, and come of poore kindred, there is a common cry made, that what man soever can out-run the Emperours Daughter by any meanes, shall be promoted to great honour and riches: now therefore if I might over-run her by any manner of way, I should not only be promoted to great honour, but also all my kindred. Then this poore man provided himself of three things, whereby he might win her. First, he made a Garland of red roses and white. Secondly, he made a rich Girdle of silke cunningly wrought. Thirdly, he made a Purse of silke, imbroydered with precious stones, and within the Purse was a Ball of three colours, and upon this Ball was written this posey, Who playeth with me, shall never be weary of my play. Then put he these three things in his bosome, and went forth to the Pallace gate, crying and saying: Come forth faire

Lady,

Lady for I am ready to runne with you, and to fulfill the Law in all things.

When the Emperour heard this, he commanded his Daughter to runne with him. This young Lady went to her chamber window, and when ſhe ſaw him, ſhe deſpiſed him, and ſaid: I have overcome many worthy Knights, and now I muſt runne with a Churle: nevertheleſſe I will fulfill my Fathers commandement.

Anon the damſell arrayed her for to run with him. And at the laſt they ran together, and within ſhort ſpace the Damſell got farre before him. When the Jugler ſaw this, he threw forth his Garland of flowers before her. And when the Damſel beheld and ſaw it, ſhe ſtooped downe and tooke it up, and ſet it upon her head, and that while the Jugler went afore her. But when this young Damſell ſaw this, ſhe wept ſore, and for ſorrow ſhe threw the Garland into a ditch, and ran after him, and at laſt ſhe overtooke him, and lift up her right hand, and gave him a buffet, ſaying; abide thou wretch, it beſeemeth not thy fathers ſonne to have me to wife. And then this Lady did over-run him, and went before him a great ſpace. And when the Jugler ſaw this, he tooke the girdle out of

his

his bosome, and threw it before her. And when she saw that, she stooped downe, and tooke it up, and girded her therewith, and the while the Jugler gate before her again. Now when she saw that, she was vered, and tooke the girdle, and with her teeth tare it in three pieces, and then threw it from her: and then she ran fast after him; and at the last overtooke him, and then she gave him a great blow, saying: O wretch thinkest thou to overcome me? and with that shee ran before him againe. The Jugler was slie and subtill and kept the purse till they were neare the mark, & then he threw it before her, and anon she stooped downe and tooke it up, and opened it, and took out the ball, and read the posey: Who playeth with mee, shall never be weary of my play, And she began to play, and continued so long in playing, till that the Jugler was before her at the marke. And thus he wan the Emperours Daughter.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour is our Saviour Christ, and his faire Daughter is the Soule of Man, which was made clear with the water of baptisme, and was also swift in running, that is, in vertue,

while that ſhe was in her cleannes ſo that no deadly ſinne might overcome her. This Jugler that is ſo ſubtill and crafty, is the Devill, which ſtudieth day and night to deceive innocents. Hée prouided him of three things. Firſt of the Garland, which betokeneth Pride: for why? a Garland of flowers is not ſet upon the arme, nor upon the foot, but upon the head, that it may be ſéen: ſo Pride would be ſéene. Wherefore S. Auguſtine ſaith, When thou ſeeſt a proud man, feare not to call him the child of the Devill. Doe thou therefore as the Maiden did, be angry at thy ſinnes, and caſt off the garland of Pride, into the ditch of Repentance, and ſo ſhalt thou give the Devill a buffet, and overcome him. But when this Jugler, that is, our ghoſtly enemie the Devill, ſeeth himſelfe overcome in one ſinne, then he returneth and tempteth a man in another ſinne; and caſteth before man the Girdle of Lechery. And alas there be many girded with this girdle of Lechery: Of the which Girdle ſpeaketh Saint Gregory, ſaying: Gird we our ſelves with the girdle of Chaſtitie, for whoſoever is girt with this Girdle ſhall not loſe the hope of life. Then caſteth this Jugler (that is, the Devil) the purſe with

the

the Ball. The purse that is open above, and close under, betokeneth the heart, which evermore should be close in the bottome against earthly things, and open above to heavenly joy: and the two strings that open and shut the Purse, betoken the love of God and of our neighbours. The Ball which is round and moveable, to every part of his difference. betokeneth covetousnesse, which moveth ever both in young and old, and therefore the Posey was true, that was wrought on the Puse: Who so playeth with mee, that is, with Covetousnesse, shall never be satisfied. Therefore saith Seneca. When all sinnes wax old, then Covetousnesse only waxeth young. Therefore let us take heed that we play not with this Ball of Covetousnesse, and then without doubt we shall obtaine through the merits of Christ, the blisse of heaven that never shall end. Unto the which he bring us that shed his precious blood for us.

The Argument.

The preaching of Gods Word, and every good prayer, is a sweet sounding melody in the eares of God, and hath a promised reward of God, yet there is now

and then ſtirred upon us ſome, let thereof by our whiſtling adverſary the Devill, and we are hindred for a time, untill by the providence of God, godly Preachers bee ſent forth, which with the hook of Gods Word doe winne againe our loſt felicity, and ſo recover the fall of ſuch ſoules, as were ſeduced and led away into the joyfull and perpetuall fellowſhip of the bleſſed Angels of Heaven.

The ſeventeenth Hiſtory.

SOmetime dwelled in Rome a Noble Emperour and a wiſe, named Theodoſius, which loved greatly the Muſick of the Harp, and likewiſe the paſtime of hunting. It befell upon a day as this Emperour huntes in a Foreſt, he heard a ſweet noiſe of a Harp ſo that through the ſweetneſſe thereof, he was almoſt raviſhed of his wits, wherefore he ſought about the Foreſt to find that melody, and at the laſt he eſpied at the end of the Foreſt a poore man ſitting beſide the water playing on a Harp full ſweetly. Then ſaid the Emperour, good friend, proceedeth this melody from thy Harp or no? The poore man anſwered and ſaid, My reverend Lord, I ſhall tell you the truth. Here beſide this

water

water, my wife, my child, and I have dwelt this thirty yeeres, and God hath given mee such a gift, that when I play on my Harp, I make such melody that the fishes of this water come out to my hand; so that therewith my wife, my child, and I have been sustained in great plenty. But alas, sometime on the other side of this water there commeth a whistler, and he whistleth so sweetly that many times the fishes forsake me and goe to him: therefore my reverend Lord I crave your help against this whistler. Then said the Emperour, I shall give thee good help, I have here in my purse a golden hook, which I will give thee, take it, and binde it fast to the end of a rod and put a worm upon the hook, then cast thy rod into the water, and play upon thy Harp, and when thou perceivest the fish to bite on the bait, draw them up to the land with that hook, and then his whistling shal not availe. When the poore man heard this, he rejoyced greatly and did as he had taught him. And when this poore man began to play upon his harp, the fishes came to the bait, and then hee took them up with his hook, and lived thereby in better estate long time, and at the last ended his life in peace and rest.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which greatly delighteth to hunt the soule of mankind in the Forrest, that is, the holy Church. Hee loveth also the melody of the Harp, that is, he loveth much those that teach the holy Word of God. This poore man that sat by the water side, betokeneth the Prelates of the Church, and the Preachers of the Word of God, which ought to be alwayes resident in their charge, & not in the world, that is, they should not set their delight in worldly things. The Preachers ought to have the Harp of holy Scripture, wherewith they may praise and honour God, and also therewith draw out of this world the sinners. Therfore saith the Psalmist thus: Praise the Lord upon the Harp, sing to the Lord with a Psalm of thankesgiving, *Psal.* 98.6. But now adayes the Preacher may say; alas; for when I preach and teach the holy Scripture, the Devill commeth and whistleth so sweetly, that the sinners draw to him, & will not hear the Word of God, but they turn themselves only to the delight of sinne. The Devill deceiveth also mankind by divers wayes. First, in the

time

time of preaching he maketh some to sleep, and them that he cannot make to sleep, hee causeth them to talk and clatter: and them that he cannot make to clatter, he maketh them so dull that they cannot understand what the Preacher saith: and them that he cannot beguile by these meanes, he putteth into them businesse, and causeth them to goe out of the Church. Behold how many wayes the Devill hath to deceive mankinde, and to let the Word of God. Therefore every Prelate and every Preacher ought to have the golden book of Gods Word against this whisteling, by which they may draw sinners out of this world up to heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Mans Soule the daughter of our Saviour, is right deare unto him, and though hee be carefull for the confirming of her in the state of sincere life, yet she is seduced by the suggestion of the flesh, which being a grievous trangressor, is yet by earnest repentance and amendment of life, brought by the soule unto dutifull obedience towards God & man, that thence forwards so continuing, they together

may be partakers of everlasting blessednesse.

The eighteenth History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperour named Ptolomeus which had but one Child, a Daughter, whom he loved so much, that day and night she was guarded with armed Knights and over those Knights hee ordained a Controuler to instruct them how they should doe. He ordained also a Steward for to guide his Houshold. And when all this was done, on a night as he lay in his bed he resolved that he would goe visit the holy land. And when all things were ready for his journey according to his desire, he called unto him his Steward and said: My trusty servant, I purpose now to goe see the holy Land, and therefore I commit my daughter to thy keeping, and I charge thee that she lack nothing, but that she have all manner of joy that appertaineth to such a Virgin. Moreover I leave to thy keeping five Knights that bee her guard, and I charge thee that they lack nothing that is fitting for them. Also I leave with thee my greyhound, commanding that thou nourish and feed him as hetherto he hath

been

been: and if thou fulfil all this that I have said thou shalt at my comming againe receive a great reward. Then said the Steward: My Lord, in all that I may I shall fulfill your command. Anone the Emperour took his journey toward the City of Jerusalem, & the Steward a long time kept well the Emperours command and the charge given him.

But at the last it befell upon a day that this Steward had espied this young Lady walking alone in an Orchard, with whose love he was suddenly surprised: wherefore straightway, against her will, he deflowred her. And when he had committed sin with her, he gave her ill language, and hated her more then ever he loved her before, and drave her out of the Palace: wherefore the Damsell by this meanes being driven to necessity and great poverty, went from dore to dore and begged her bread. But when the Knights that weare her kæpers saw this, they reproved shamefully the Steward of that inhumane deed. Then the Steward waxed wroth, and for great hate that hee had in his heart, he spoyled the Knights of their goods & drove them from the Palace. And when they were thus robbed and exiled, some for lack of living

became

became theeves, and some men killers, so that through this inconvenience they wrought great harm.

Not long after there came tidings that the Emperour was arrived in that land comming homeward. And when the Steward heard this, he was greatly troubled and moved in himselfe and said: It cannot be but I shall be accused for my trespasse that I have committed against the Emperours commandement, and he hath ever been my good and mercifull Lord, therefore better it were that I go and meet him with all lowlinesse and humility, and accuse my selfe unto him, and aske him mercy, then that any other should prevent me and accuse me to my Lord for my treason. Then the Steward straight put off all his clothes save his hosen and his shirt, and took three ropes with him in his right hand, and bare foot went and met the Emperour. Now when the Emperour had espyed him comming a farre off in such manner, hee wondred greatly. And when the Steward was come so neere that hee might speak to the Emperour, hee fell down on his knees and saluted him reverently. Then said the Emperour, what is befallen thee, that thou meetest me after

such

ſuch a ſort: for in that thou art my Steward, thou ſhouldeſt have met me with a great company of Noble Knights. Oh my Lord, quoth he, there is a heavie chance befain me, for the which it behoves me to meet your Highneſſe thus. Then ſaid the Emperor, what chance is befain thee? My Reverend Lord, quoth he, it behoves you firſt to ask me why I bring with me theſe three ropes. Then ſaid the Emperor, why beareſt thou theſe three ropes in thy hand? Then anſwered the Steward and ſaid; This firſt Rope I bring with me to bind my hands and feet ſo hard, till the bloud burſt out on every ſide, for that I have well deſerved: the ſecond Rope I bring with me, to draw me at a horſe taile upon the pavement, till that my bones be bare without fleſh, for that is but due to me for the great treaſon I have done againſt you. The third Rope I have brought is to hang me with, upon an high Gallowes, ſo long till that the birds light on my head and on my body, and feed themſelves of my fleſh, for theſe things are due to ſuch treſpaſſers and breakers of the Law as I am. Yet oh my Reverend Lord, have mercy on me, for I dare not acknowledge my treſpaſſe, untill I have obtained thy pardon.

Then

Then ſaid the Emperour: I ſée in thée great contrition, therefore tell me thy treſpaſſe, and ſurely thou ſhalt finde mercy and grace. Alas, alas, then ſaid the Steward, I have defiled thine only daughter, and have driven her out of thy Palace, ſo that now in great neceſſity ſhee beggeth her bread from dore to dore. I have alſo diſpoiled thy knights of all their goods, and now ſome of them in regard they lack living become théeves and robbers, & ſome men-killers, and the Controuler of the knights I have ſlaue: but I fed thy grayhound with the beſt meat as long as I might, and tyed him with a chaine, yet at the laſt hee brake his chaine and went his way, ſo that now hée runneth about the Countrey.

When the Emperour heard this, hee was ſore aſtonied, and ſaid: Haſt thou defloured my daughter, whom I loved ſo well, and alſo deſpoiled my knights, and ſlaine their Controuler, and the grayhound which I loved well, of whom I gave thée charge, is he gone alſo? Surely were it not that I had forgiven thee, and that thou haſt humbled thy ſelfe ſo much, I would have put thée to the vileſt death that could be thought: notwithſtanding depart hence

forthwith,

forthwith, and bring againe my daughter, that thou maist marry her, and any harme hereafter befall to her through thy default, then will I double thy punishment. Also bring againe my Knights, and restore to them their goods, & set them in their state and offices as they were before. Also seek diligently for my Grayhound till thou find him, and then make him fast, so that hereafter in thee there be no fault found. Now when the Steward heard this, he bowed down with most humble submission, and thanked the Emperour of his great mercy. And then he went forth, and sought deligently through all the Empire, untill hee found the Emperours Daughter, and the Knights, and the Grayhound, and brought them home again. And after he had maryed the young Lady and restored againe the Knights goods, hee ended his life in peace.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. His daughter betokneth the Soule of man, made after the similitude of our Lord God. The five Knights are the five Wits, armed with the vertue of Baptism for the preservation

ſervation of the Soule. The Controuler of the Knights, is Reaſon, which ought to rule the Wits. The grayhound is the fleſh of man; and the Steward is every man, to whom God hath given a life and ſoule to kæp, under paine of loſing everlaſting life. But wretched and wicked man, not remembring what is to come, full often corrupteth and polluteth his Soule with ſinne, and repelleth her from her palace of heaven, and then wandreth ſhe from doore to doore, that is, from ſinne to ſinne. Yæ diſpoileth theſe five Knights of their goods, that is, the five Wits, or rather gracious Vertues, taking away the naturall light from their eyes, giving them bad counſell, and alſo moving their eares to liſten unto ſlaunder and backbiting, and ſo forth of all the other Wits, and thus ſome be made theeves, and ſome men-killers. The Maſter of theſe five Wits is ſlaine whenſoever man is ruled by Will, and not by reaſon. The grayhound, that is, the Fleſh, wherein a man delighteth, was fed & bound with a chaine of Reaſon, but breaking out, full oft doth much harme.

The comming againe of this Emperor from the holy land, betokens the comming

of

of our Lord Jesus Christ at the day of doome to judge all mankind: Wherefore let us as the steward did, accuse our selves of our sinnes first, lest the Devill and the World accuse us, then it is too late to aske mercy: therefore put wee off our clothes betime, that is, our sinfull life, and take wee three Ropes in our hands. The first Rope that should bind our hands and feet, betokeneth the Rope of true Repentance, which not onely ought to binde our hands and feet, but also both our hearts within us, and our outward conversations, in such austerity of life, that the bloud burst out on every side, that is, that sinne might void it selfe. Hereto accordeth Ezekiel, saying thus: Whensoever the sinfull man doth repent himselfe, he shall be saved. The second Rope, for to draw the trespasser, is acknowledging of our sinnes, which should draw us from the beginning of our life, unto our lives end, by a perfect reconciliation of our lives to God and man, unto the time that the flesh be fallen from the bones, that is, till the lust of the flesh be turned away by the stones of Repentance. For even as the stone by nature is hard, right so the way of Repentance ought to bee hard. The third Rope, that should

hang

hang the fellon, is the Rope of amendment of life: for it is writen in Holy Scripture, There is more joy in Heaven over one Sinner that turneth unto the Lord in time, then over ninety and nine juſt ones.

Like as the Steward brought againe the Emperours Daughter, ſo it behoveth us to ſeeke about by a fruitfull faith, untill we find againe our loſt ſoule, and ſo bring her againe to the Church, to rule well our five Wits, to feed our Grayhounds as we ſhould, and make our life ſo cleane and pure, that we fall not againe to ſinne, for feare that it fortune to us worſe, and that we have no leiſure to aſke mercy againe at our need. And if wee fulfill all this truely unto our lives end, without doubt we ſhal obtaine everlaſting life. To the which our Lord bring us all, Amen.

The Argument.

The violating of our innocence in not imitating the Law of God, is here deſcribed, which being adjudged after the Law, is death, but by the merits of Chriſt our Saviour we obtaine ſalvation.

The

The nineteenth History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mightie Emperour and a wise, named Eufemie, who ordained a Law, that whosoever ravished a Virgin, should be at her discretion, whether shee would put him to death, or would take him to her husband.

It befell after, that a man ravished in one Night two faire Maydens: the first Damsell which he ravished, desired, that he should dye, but the second desired him to her husband. The ravisher was taken and led before the Judge, that he might satisfie both these Damsels according to the equity of the cause. The first Damsell desired his death according to the Law. Then said the second, I desire to have him to my husband: and like as thou hast the Law for thee, so in like case I have it for me, and also my petition is much better then yours, for it is more charitable: therefore mee thinkes in my reason, that the Justice should give sentence in favour and furtherance of my desire. When the Justice heard the mercy of the second Damsell, he gave judgement that he should take her to wife, and so it was done.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. The Ravisher betokeneth every sinner, which ravisheth Gods mercie, as often as he violateth the holy Commandements of God by sinne; for the Devill can never overcome man, except hee bee suffered by the will. For S. Augustine saith, It is no sinne except it be voluntary. The Ravisher also is called before the Justice, when the Soule is departed from the body: And anon the first Damsell (Innocencie) laid against the Sinner, that he ought to dye everlastingly by the Law of righteousnesse: But the other Maiden (that is, Christs merits) alleaged for him, how the mercie of God ought to helpe by hearty repentance, and acknowledging of sins, which is the high way to everlasting life. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The mother of the Child of grace and of the reprobate is here declared, and set forth: but which of them shall be saved, and which of them shall be damned, is not yet revealed unto the world, untill

the

the last and dreadfull Day of Judgement.

The twentieth History.

SOmetime there dwelled in Rome a mighty Emperour and a rich, named Lypodus, which took to a wife a faire Virgin and a gentle, the Daughter of the King of Assyria. This young Lady conceived and bare him a Sonne, and in the birth she dyed: not long after her decease the Emperour married another wife, and had by her a Son also: And immediately after the second child was borne he sent them both into a strange Land there to bee brought up. Now when the children had been there long, the Empresse said: My reverend Lord, ten yeers be now fully expired since I bare my Son and yet I never saw him but once, and that was the first day of his birth, therefore I beseech you my Lord, to send for him to the end that I may once rejoyce me in his sight. Then said the Emperour, I have another Child by my first Wife, and if I send for thy son, then must I send for them both: notwithstanding, at the Empresses request he sent forth them both. And when they were come, they were of passing fea-

ture, and well trained us, and so passing like in all things, that hardly the one might be known from the other, but the Father knew the difference.

Then said the Mother of the second Child: My Lord I pray you tell mee which of these is my Son. Then the Emperour called to him that Sonne that hée begat on his first wife. When the Empresse heard this, shée gave all care to cherish him, and neglected the other child. Now when the Emperour saw this, he said to his Wife, certainly I have deceived thée; for him that thou lovest so much is not thy Son, but the other is thy Son. Then set she all her care upon the second, and set light by the first. When the Emperour saw this, he said: Truely I deceived thée; without doubt, this is not thy Sonne, but one of them two is thy Sonne. Then said the Mother: My Lord, I must earnestly intreat you, that you would tell me without dissembling, which of them is my Sonne. The Emperour answered and said, certainly I will not tell you, untill they be both come to mans estate, and this is my reason. First, I told you that this was your Sonne, and you cherished him, and forsook that other: and

when

when I told you that this was your Son, then thou slightly regarded the first, and cherished the second. Therefore my desire is that you yet cherish them both alike, that I may have like joy of them. When the Empresse heard this, shee cherished them both alike. And when they were both come to age, the Emperour made a great Feast, and before all his Nobles he told his wife openly which was her Sonne. Then rejoyced the Empresse greatly, and when shee had lived a good time, she ended her life in peace and rest.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperours Son betokeneth those that be chosen to everlasting life, & those that be not chosen. The Mother of them is the Providence of God that nourisheth them both: therefore our Lord will not that his Providence should let the World know which be chosen, and which bee not chosen. For if she knew that, then would shee love the one and hate the other, and so Charity among us would bee overthrown, and wee should live in discord and strife: but Truth at the day of Judgement shall tell to us which of them shall be saved, and which of them shall be

damned. Therefore pray we in this World that we may come to the everlaſting Feaſt in Heaven, Unto the which God bring us all.

The Argument.

The ungodly of this World will not take any paines to live vertuouſly, and yet oftentimes they are inriched for the moſt part with the riches of Fortune, but they are not carefull of the reward laid up for the righteous in Heaven, neither doe they feare the torments of Hell appointed for the Reprobates.

The 21. Hiſtory.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a Noble Emperour named Polinus, which had three Sonnes whom he loved much. It befell upon a day, when this Emperour lay upon his bed, he bethought him to which of his Sonnes he might give his Empire after his deceaſe. Then called he to him his three ſons, and ſaid: Which of you is moſt ſlothfull, he ſhall have mine Empire after my deceaſe. The firſt Son anſwered and ſaid: the Empire by reaſon ſhould be mine, for I am ſo ſlothfull, that if my foot were in the fire I had ra-

ther

ther it should bee burnt, then I would take it out. Then said the second, I am (quoth he) more fit for the Empire then thou; for though there were a cord about my neck wherewith I should be hanged, and if I had a sharp sword in my hand, for very sloth I will not once put forth my hand to cut the cord to save my life. And when these two Brethren had thus said, then the third spake for himselfe, thus: I ought to bee Emperour before you both, for I exceed you in sloth, and that I will prove thus: I lie upright in my bed, and there droppeth water upon my eyes, and for very sloth I will not move my head, neither to the right side of the bed, nor to the left, to save my selfe. When the Emperor heard this he bequeathed the Empire unto the youngest, as to the slothfullest of of the brethren.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Devill, which is the Lord & father over the ungodly in this World. By the first son is understood a man that chanceth into evill company, by which he falleth into misdemeanor, and had lever be burnt in the fire of sinne, then depart from them

The ſecond Sonne betokeneth him that knowes himſelfe to be faſt bound with the bands of ſin, wherewith he is to be hanged on the gallowes of Hell, and is ſo ſlothfull that he wil not cut it away with the ſword of true Repentance. By the third ſonne is underſtood a man that heares of the joyes of heaven & the paines of hell, he will not move himſelfe to the right nor to the left ſide to forſake his ſins, for fear of eternall paine: ſuch a man without doubt, for his ſloth ſhall receive the Kingdome of Hell, from which keep us our Lord Jeſus, Amen.

The Argument.

Mans ſoule, as a Captaine generall, with his forces of armed Vertues, fights againſt a ſtrong City, the World, wherein is the Caſtle of Vanity, and in that are the poyſoned forces of ſinne, as mortall enemies of Mankind, againſt whom well to fight, is the meanes to obtain victory, and triumph everlaſtingly.

The 22 Hiſtory.

ALexander the mighty Emperour ſometime ruled, who beſieged a City of the King of Egypt with a great hoaſt, nevertheleſſe this Emperour loſt many

wor-

worthy Knights without any hurt of stroke. And thus from day to day his people died suddenly, whereof this Alexander wondred greatly, and was full sorrowfull therefore in his minde, and he called unto him the wisest Philosophers that might be found, and demanded of them why his people dyed thus suddenly without any wounds. The Philosophers answered and said, my Lord it is no wonder: for upon the wals of that Castle within the City is a Cockatrice, through whose sight your men die, for they are infected with the venome that commeth from her eyes, and thereupon they die.

Then this Alexander asked if there were any remedy against the Cockatrice The Philosophers answered, and said; My Lord, there is good remedy, for if it please you to set up a large Mirrour of clere glasse over against the Cockatrice, between your hoast and the wall of the City, when the Cockatrice beholdeth her selfe in the Mirrour, the deadly nature of her venemous sight shall return againe to her selfe, and thus she shall die, and your men shall thereby be saved. Then the Emperour did as the Philosophers counselled him, and set up forthwith a large Mirrour

of

of excellent cléere glaſſe, and thus was the Cockatrice ſlain, and the Emperour with his hoaſt made an aſſault to the City, and obtained the victory.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour may be called every Chriſtian man which ought to gather an hoaſt of vertues for without vertue no man can fight ſpiritually. The City againſt which yee ſhall fight is the World, wherein there is an high Caſtle, that is, Vanity of Vanities, and all is but Vanity. In this vanity ſtandeth the Cockatrice, that is, pride of life, deſire of the eyes, the luſt of the fleſh, wherefore this pride infecteth ſo many that they die in ſinne everlaſtingly. Wherefore the beſt remedy againſt this pride, is the conſideration of our uncleanneſſe, how we came naked into the World. And if it be asked why a man is proud, certainly it may bee anſwered thus, for default of cloathing himſelfe with vertues: what ſhall wee doe when we die thus ghoſtly, but ſet up a pure mirrour of conſcience, that by that conſcience we may conſider our ſlidings: and our brittleneſſe, as in a glaſſe where we may ſée our own default? And if we doe

thus

thus, without doubt, the Cockatrice, that is, Pride of life, desire of the eyes, & lust of the flesh shall be utterly destroyed, and we shall obtaine the victory of this worldly City, and by Christs merits winne everlasting life. Unto the which he bring us all.

The Argument.

The Soule of man being conversant in the body with the flesh; she seeketh by sinister meanes to overthrow the Soule with her uncleane lusts after the World, where though the Soule for a time suffereth shipwrack of worldly felicity, yet the Lion of the Tribe of Iuda is of power not onely to comfort her in necessity, but also to revenge her injury, and to make her to repossesse her former estate in the World to come.

The 23. History.

A Mighty Emperour sometime ruled the Romans, named Archelaus, who in his old age espoused a faire lady, whom a young Knight loved, and had to doe with her as oft as him list. It befell on a night that this Emperour bethought him in his Bed, to visite the City of Ierusalem, wherefore without any more delay he ordained

dained all things neceſſary for his journy, and taking his leave of his Empreſſe, and of the States of his Empire, went towards the ſaid City.

When the Empreſſe heard this, ſhée took the Maſter of the Ship aſide, and ſaid. If thou wilt conſent to me, and bée true, aſk of mée what thou wilt, and thou ſhalt have it. The Maſter of the Ship was corrupt with covetouſneſſe, and ſaid: O my dear Lady, whatſoever thou will command me I ſhall without faile fulfill it, ſo that thou will reward mée for my labour. Then ſaid the Empereſſe, before thou doſt ought for me, I will give thée whatſoever thou deſired, ſo that thou wilt ſwear to be true to me & keep my counſell. Then the Maſter of the ſhip ſware to be true to her.

Then ſaid the Empreſſe: my Lord goeth with you in your ſhip, therefore when he is in the midſt of the Sea, caſt him overboord, that hée may be drowned, and thou ſhalt have what thou wilt for thy reward. Then the Maſter of the ſhip ſware a great Oath, and ſaid: By the great god Iupiter after he commeth once within my Ship, you ſhall never ſée him more. Then the Lady gave him as much gold as he would have, and he went to his Ship.

And

And within short time after, the Emperour took his ship, and when hée was in the midst of the Sea, the maister of the ship took the Emperour, and threw him overboord into the Sea. When the Maister returned againe hee told the Empresse how he cast the Emperour into the sea, whereof she was right glad.

This Emperour that was cast into the Sea, had learned in his youth to swim, and swam to an Iland in the sea. And when he was faint, & like to be drowned, he prayed to God to be his help. At the length hee came into a little Iland wherein was nothing but Lyons, and Leopards, and such other beasts as swam thither from other Lands. When the Emperour had got to Land in that Ile, he espyed a young Lion fighting with an old Leopard, and the Lion was too weak, and was almost overcome. Now the Emperour had great compassion on the Lyon, and drew out his Sword, and forthwith slue the Leopard. The Lyon from that time forth followed the Emperour, and would not leave him for any thing, but every day the prey that the Lyon took, he brought and laid at the Emperours fét, and the Emperour smot fire on flint stone, and broyled the body

of

of the beast in the skinne: and thus was hee fed for a long season. At length as he walked by the Sea shore he saw a goodly Ship come sailing by, and with a high voyce he cryed. And when the ship-men heard the voyce, they wondred what it might bee, wherefore they sailed toward him: and when they were come neere him, he said. God friends take mee with you, and I shall pay you a good fraught. So they took him into their Ship, and the Lion followed him, swimming in the Sea after the ship: and when the Lion was neere drowned the ship-men had pitty on him, and took him into the Ship. Now when the Emperour came to land, hee paid his fraught and went forth with the Lion till he came neere his own Palace where he heard Trumpets, and all other Musick and as he marvelled what it might bee, there came from the Palace a Squire toward him that he knew, but the Squire knew not him: To whom the Emperour said thus: Good friend I pray thee tell me what is the cause of this melody. The Squire answered and said, the Empresse is married this day, and all the States of the Empire are at the Feast, and therefore they make such melody. Then said the

Em-

Emperour to the Squire: where is her husband that was the Emperour before? The Squire said that he went to the Holy-land, and was drowned by the way. Then the Emperour said: Sir, I pray you tell the Empresse, and the Lord that shall be her husband, that I (so please them) will shew their Majesties rare sport with my Lion. The Squire granted to doe his errand, and went in and told his Lord and Lady, that a goodly old man was at the gate, that would shew them sport with his Lion. Then said the new married Lady, bring him in, hee perchance may deserve meat for his play. When the Emperour with his Lyon was brought in, the Lyon without any setting on, ranne upon the young Knight that was newly married, and slue him, and when hee had so done, he ran upon the Empresse also, and devoured her to the bones, before all the Lords of the Empire. And when the Nobles saw this, they were greatly agast, and began to flie. But the Emperour with his fair speech perswaded them, and said: Loe this is the vengeance of God, for this my wife hath used Adultery a long time with the Knight that lyeth dead, also shee practised my death with the Master of the

ship

ship, & thereupon he threw me into the sea, but God saved me from death, and because I holpe once this Lion at a need, he never forsoke me since: And now as ye all see, when I came into my Pallace, without provoking of mee, hee hath slaine both the Adulterers, and therefore understand yee for truth that I am your Emperour. Now when they heard this, they looked more fervently upon him, and discerned him to be their Emperour, and greatly rejoycing, praysed God for that Miracle, which had saved their Lord and Emperour: And they lived together a long time in peace.

The Morall.

Deare friend, by this Emperour we may understand every christian man that purposeth to visit the Citie of Ierusalem, that is, to get everlasting life throw faith. But his wife that is, the wretched flesh, murmureth against the soule, and loveth better an Adulterer, that is, deadly sinne, then her husband. This Emperour went into a Ship, taking his journey towards the Citie of Ierusalem, that is, he went to the Church of God, which is the way to God: but the wife, that is, fleshly men, accused him to the Master of the ship, that is,

the

to the Prelates of the Church, for great rewards, which oftentimes do blinde the sight of many Justices, whereby many perfect men be cast out of the ship into the Sea to be drowned, that is, out of the Church into the Sea of this world. But what shall hee doe then that is thus cast to be troubled in this world? certainely this ought he to doe: let him learne to swim, that is, let him put all his hope in God, and by his grace he shall come to an Iland, that is the Religion of heart, and then he shall love ever the better to keepe himselfe out of this world, and therefore S. Iames saith: A pure Religion and undefiled before God, even the Father is this &c. And hee that is in this Religion shall finde a Lyon, whom he behoveth to have against the Devill. This Lyon is our Lord Jesus Christ that came of the Tribe of Iuda, who fighteth ever against the Devill: and if a man hath holpe this Lyon, that is, hath served God against his enemies at any time, hee may trust well that he will not forsake him at his need, according to the Psalmist, saying: I am with him in trouble. By this Lyon thou must take thy wife, that is, thy flesh with repentance, and slay thy sinne, and then without doubt

thou shalt obtaine the Empire of heaven: Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen

The Morall.

The Soule of man espoused to Christ in Baptisme, yet dyeth by meanes of sinne, leaving behinde her her sonne, called Reason, or rather the word of God, which searched the disease of man her sinfull father: and being sent for to cure the malady of his step-mothers Will, hee refuseth to administer ghostly comfort unto her.

The 24. History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a Noble Emperour named Gorgony, who married a vertuous and beautifull Lady to his wife. This young Lady in due processe of time conceived and bare a Sonne, a faire and an amiable child. When this child was ten yeeres old, his mother the Empresse dyed. Not long after the Emperour married another wife: The second wife could not affect or love by any meanes the Emperours Sonne, but did him all the shame and reproach that shee might. When the Emperour perceived this, willing

ling to please his wife, hee exiled his sonne out of his Empire. And when the sonne was exiled, he went and studied Physicke, so that within short time he was a skilfull and a cunning Physition. It befell not long after, that the Emperour his Father, sickned and was almost at deaths dore, wherefore, when hee heard that his sonne was so good a Physition, hee sent for him by letters, praying him that hee would come to him without delay. Now the son willing to obey his Fathers commandement, in all haste came to him: and when he had felt his pulses, he discerned the sickness, and ministred physicke to him, whereby he shortly recovered.

Not long after, the Empresse his Stepmother began to fall sicke, & many Physitions said shee would dye. And when the Emperour heard this, he sent to his sonne to helpe her of her sickenesse. Then said his sonne, certainely father I will lay no hand on her. Then the Emperour began to ware wroth, & said: if thou wilt not obey my commandement, thou shalt henceforth depart my Empire. His sonne answered and said, If you doe so (deare father) you doe unrightly, for well you know, that you exiled me out of your Empire through

her suggestion, and my absence was cause of your sicknes now my presence is cause of her sicknesse, and therefore I will not meddle with her, nor use any physicke unto her: for oftentimes Physitions are deceived in their Patients, therefore I dare lay no hand on her, for if it should fortune her to dye, men would judge that my physicke were the cause thereof.

Then said the Emperour: shee hath the very same sicknesse that I had. His sonne answered and said: though shee have the same sicknesse, nevertheless you are not both of one constitution: for whatsoever I did to you, you were therewith content, and when you saw me come within the Pallace, you rejoyced at my comming, and was greatly pleased with the sight of mee that you begat: but when this my Stepmother saw me, she was angry, and tooke corrie at her heart, and therefore if I should but speake to her: her sorrow would much more increase, & if I should offer to touch her, she would be in a rage. Also a Physition profiteth little except the Patient take pleasure in him. Now none can cure her of envie. And when hee had spoken his minde, hee tooke his leave, and departed thence.

The *Morall.*

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth every Christian man, which is married to Christ in the Baptisme of regeneration, for then the soule is made the Spouse of Christ, on whom our Saviour begetteth a sonne, that is, the knowledge of his Word, and Will. But when the childe grew to some tenne yeeres of age, or some increase in vertue, his mother Christianity dyed: then vertue departeth from youth, and afterwards the Christian man his Father matcheth himselfe with another woman, the stepmother of the said youth named ignorant Envie, which in no wise could effect the Emperours Sonne of knowledge, wherefore she caused him to be banished into a strange Country, from his Father and her both. It hapned that the good Christian man, being overruled by his wife, falleth sick and sendeth for his Sonne, knowledge of Gods word and will, to cure him as his Physition, who dutifully performeth the same. But his stepmother falling sick at the sight of the Emperours son, though the Christian man her husband laboures to him to cure her as a good Physition of her Sonle, yet

ſhée not liking his good endeavour to win her from ignorant envy of the Truth, is very hardly healed of her ſickneſſe, but oftentimes dyeth in her ignorant envy and wilfull wickedneſſe, without any hope of health or life unto eternall ſalvation, ſo that the Phyſition comes thither too late.

The Argument.

Jeſus Chriſt the Sonne of God ought to bee cheriſhed and foſtered in our hearts by faith and good life: which is taken from us, when wee are not thankefull unto him for his graces. Wherefore the preachers of Gods Word, as good Phyſitians, are ſent unto us, for to admoniſh and warne us to perſevere in amendment of life, and conſtant hope in Chriſts merits, and ſo to harbour him in our hearts, as he may thereby beſtow on us the promotion of heavenly bliſſe.

The 25. Hiſtory.

SOmetimes there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Polenus, who tooke to wife the Kings daughter of Germany, a faire Lady and a courteous which within ſhort time conceived & baze a Son. When the childe was borne, the States of

the Empire came to the Emperour, and every one of them besought the Emperor to have the bringing up of his sonne. The Emperor answered and said: to morrow shall be a Turney, and there you shall all be, and which of you doth best, and obtaineth the victory, hee shall have the képing of my son: and if he traine him up well, I shall promote him to great dignity and honour, and if he doe the contrary, hee shall dye the foulest death that can be thought. Then said they: Most reverend Lord, all this pleaseth us well, On the morrow when every man was come to the Turney the States justed valiantly: but at length came a valiant Knight named Iosias, who so couragiously bare himselfe there, that he obtained the victory. And immediately after the Tourney was all done, this Iosias tooke the Child, & led him home with him. And because the Emperours sonne should be received with state in his Country, he sent before to his Castle, and commanded his officers that they should royally provide for him, and that the childes lodging should be in the midst of the Castle, & also that the seaven Sciences should bee pourtrayed about the Childes bed, that when the Child waked out of his sléepe, he might

lye in his bed and behold the same. The Knight had a wholesome Well by the childes bed side, wherein hee used to bathe himself, and the Knights wife bare the key of the Well, and there was a window whereat the Sun might comfortably shine upon him. It fortuned upon a day that the Lady left open the window through negligence, which being done, thither came a Beare, and seeing the window open went to the well, & bathed him therein, of whose bathing the well savoured after, through the great heate which was at that time in the hunted Beare, whereby whosoever dranke of that water waxed leprous within short time after. So it fortuned that the Lord and the Lady, with all the houshold by drinking of the water of that well became lepers, notwithstanding it appeared not presently. Not long after it fortuned there came a great Eagle in at the window where the Emperours son lay, & bare the childe away out of the Cradle. Now when the Lord of the Castle heard this he wept bitterly & said: Alas alas, woe is me wretched creature, that ever I was borne, what shall I doe? now I am the sonne of death, for I am become a loathsome leper, and so is my wife with all my houshold,

also

also the Emperours son is lost and gone.

Now while hee thus mourned, there came to him a Physition, and said: Sir if you will doe after my counsell you shall not repent you, First it behoveth you, your Wife, and all your houshold to be let bloud, and after that to bee bathed & cleane washed, and then I will apply to you my medicine: and when you are whole then shall you and your houshold walke up to the mountaines, and seek the Emperours sonne, for the Eagle hath let him fall there in some place. Then the Lord followed the advise and counsell thus given him by the Physition, and forthwith hee and all his houshold were let bloud, and received the medicine, and within a short time after were all whole and sound. When they were thus healed, hee tooke his Horse accompanied with three men, and rode forth to seeke the Childe, and at last hee found him whole and sound, lying in a valley, whereat he greatly rejoyced. And incontinently with great joy and gladnesse he led the Childe home to the Emperour his Father. Now when the Emperour saw his Sonne in good health, hee was right glad, and promoted him to great honour. And so after that he had long time lived there in

noble

noble eſtate, he after ended his life in peace and reſt.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betoketh the Father of Heaven, his Sonne betoketh our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to nouriſh whom many men deſire, at ſuch time as they receive the Sacrament of his death and paſſion. He nouriſheth him beſt, that inſteth with the Devill, and overcommeth him by godly life. This Knight that toke this Childe with him, betoketh a good Chriſtian man, that evermore abſtaineth truly from doing evill, and laboureth continually to doe good to all men. Therefore doe we as the Knight did, ſend meſſengers before to prepare and make cleane the Caſtle of our hearts, from all ſpots of ſinne, by lively faith, and ſo ſhall this Child Jeſus reſt in the midſt of our hearts.

The Well betoketh mercy, which ought to be next our Lord, for whoſoever is without mercy and truth may not nouriſh that bleſſed child Jeſus: but it happeth oft that the Knights wife, that is the fleſh of man, beareth the key of mercy, and oft leaveth that Well open, and then comes the Beare, that is, the Devill, and leaveth his

his loathsome filth in the Well of mercy, and who so tasteth thereof shall be infected with the leprosie of sinne. The windowe wherein the Sun shined is the grace of the holy Ghost, by whom men are comforted ghostly. By this windowe the Eagle commeth in, that is, the flying affections of the wicked world, carrying away the knowledge of God from us, into the vale of ignorance and security, and then man hath great cause to weepe, but what shall we doe when the childe is gone, but send for a skilfull Physition, that is, a discreet Minister of the word of God, which shall give him counsell to let him bleed, and all his houshold, that is, to put out sinne through acknowledging thereof, and reconciling himselfe with earnest repentance, unto his heavenly father.

Then must he bathe himselfe with teares of contrition & compunction of heart, and after that, take the medicine of amendment of life, & so live pure and cleane from all manner of sin, and when he hath done thus, he must leape on the Palfrey of good perseverance from evill, & ride forth with the three men: that is, falling from evill, praying unto God, and well deserving towards men: & then without doubt he shall

finde

finde the Childe Jeſus in the valley of humility, and not on a hill, that is, pride. And if yee doe this, doubtleſſe he ſhall have might and power to nourith that bleſſed Childe Jeſus, for whoſe nourishing the Father of heaven ſhall promote him unto everlaſting ioy. Unto the which ioy bee bring us, that ſhed his pretious bloud for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Chriſt the giver of everlaſting glory hath proclaimed a like joy and bliſſe in heaven, aſwell to the poore as to the rich: But the rich oftentimes coveting all, loſeth the prerogative which the poore in heart enjoy by the providence of *God*, Yet as he is a righteous God, hee ordaineth both for the rich and poore in ſuch ſort, that if they will, they may together joyfully bee ſatisfied with the great plenty of his aboundant graces.

The 26. Hiſtory.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Fulgemius, which governed his people Nobly, and loved them ſo much, that he made to proclaime throughout all nations, whoſoever would

come

come to him rich or poore at a certaine day, should have their petition whatsoever it were. When the mighty men heard this they were glad, and came at the day assigned, and every man put forth his petition unto the Emperour, immediately their petitions were granted and fulfilled, insomuch that a great part of the revenewes of the Empire was distributed among them. Then every man was joyfull and went home againe and tooke possession of such lands and Castles as the Emperour had given them.

Straight way after, the poore men in the Emperours Dominions, gathered them together, & said, a common cry was made, that whosoever came to the Emperours Pallace should have whatsoever hee asked. The rich men have beene there lately, and obtained their petitions: therefore goe we now, and try if wee may obtaine any good of the Emperor. Now this counsell liked them all, wherefore they went to the Emperours Pallace: and there they put forth their petitions according to the Proclamation.

When the Emperour had heard them, hee said to them: Deare friends, I have heard all your petitions, and it is true that

my

my Proclamation was that every man indifferently, should come and have their petitions, but the rich & mighty men have beene here before you, to whom I have given all that I had, save onely the royalty of my Lordship, and so have I nothing left to give you. Whereto the poore men sadly replyed. Most gracious Soveraigne have compassion on us, & let us not goe away empty, for we know well that it is our owne default that wee came not rather with these other rich and mighty men: but sith it is so, we crave your Grace, that we may obtaine somewhat by the which wee may live. Then said the Emperour: good friends, though I have given most of my lands, rents, tenements, & Castles to the rich men that came before you, nevertheless, I have kept still in mine owne hands the soveraignty and dominion over them, and that I doe give to you, & so they shall be your servants, and be obedient to you all. And when the poore men heard this, they greatly thereat rejoyced, and kneeled downe to the Emperour and thanked him saying, Loe, though we come late, yet we be Lords over all these other. And with this they tooke their leave, and went home againe. But when the rich & mighty men

heard

heard that, they were greatly moved, and ordained a common Parliament among themselves. And thus it was spoken among them: Alas, alas, how may wee serve them that somtime were but peasants & our subjects in all manner things & and now they be made Lords ouer us. Therefore goe we all with ons assent to the Emperour, and pray him for redresse. When this was said, they forthwith went to the Emperour, and said to him, Reverend Lord, what may this meane, those that were our servants erewhile: bee now our Lords & wee beseech your highnesse that it may not be so.

Then said the Emperour: my good friends, I doe you no wrong, for my proclamation was common, that whatsoever you asked of me you should have your petition, & you asked onely of me lands, and honors, and all those I have granted you to your own desires, in so much that I kept nothing for my selfe, and you were well content at your going hence. Now after that came the simple and poore men, and asked of me some boone, according to my Proclamation, and I had nothing to give them but onely the soveraignte and dominion over you, which I kept in my

hands

hands: and when the poore men cryed so to me, I gave them the authority over you, yet I see not that you can blame mée therefore: for I gave you all the wealth which I had. Then said they: O deare and gracious Lord, we pray you let us have your help and advise in this so dangerous a case. The Emperour answered and said: Sirs if you will follow my advise, I shall give ye good and profitable counsell. Then they said: we bee ready to fulfill whatsoever you advise us for our profit. Then said the Emperour, My loving friends, you have received of me both Lands and Tenements, and also great plenty of honours and preferments, the which by my counsell you shall impart to the poore men that they may grant unto you the soveraignty, and that dominion which they have. When the mighty men heard this, they willingly condescended to impart their goods among the poore men, and they as willingly gave them againe the authority over them, like as they had of the rich men. And thus were they both contented, and the Emperour was greatly commended of all the people, because he so well contented both parties.

The Morall.

Deare friends, by this Emperour is understood our Lord Jesus Christ, which made a Proclamation by his Prophets, Patriarkes, Apostles and Preachers, that every man, both poore & rich, should come and aske everlasting joy, and without doubt they shall obtaine their petition. But the rich and mighty men aske for no other thing, but worldly honour and transitorie riches, yet this world shall passe, and all the covetousnesse thereof: wherefore hee gave them so much of worldly wealth, that hee had nothing for himselfe, according to the Scripture: The birds of heaven have nests, and the Foxes of the earth have caves, but the Sonne of man hath nothing in the earth where hee may put his head Mat. 8. 20. The poore men be the meek in heart, of whom the Lord speaketh saying: Blessed be the poore in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven Math. 5. 3. So it shall seeme that they have soveraignty in heaven above the mighty men of this world, therefore these rich men ought to impart of their temporall riches with the poore men according to the Scripture, Make you friends with riches of iniquity

quity, that when yee shall want, they may receive you into everlasting habitation. Luk.16.9. and according to Tob.4.9. Give almes of thy substance: if thou hast but a little bee not afraid to give a little almes: And thus yée may attaine unto the kingdome of heaven, Unto the which I beseech Almighty God to bring us all.

The Argument.

The Emperour of glory, Christ Iesus, hath two daughters, the one faire, the other foule, the faire daughter is the world, and the pleasures thereof, the foule is poverty and trouble: The faire daughter is desired of many, the foule of few, for hee that loveth the world regardeth onely the vanities thereof, but hee that loveth God will suffer all persecution and trouble for the obtayning of him.

The 27. History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a noble Emperor named Domitian, which had two Daughters, the one of them was passing faire, but the other foule and ill-favoured: wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that who so would take his faire Daughter to wife, should have

have nothing with her, but her beautifull and comely personage. But whoso would marry his foule Daughter: should have all his Empire after his decease. Now when this Proclamation was made, there came many Lords that desired to marry his faire Daughter. To whom the Emperour answered thus: Sirs, yée wot not what yée desire, for if yée marry her, yée shall have nothing with her but her beautifull and comely personage: and furthermore, if I give her to one of you rather then to another, you will grutch, therefore if yée will néeds have her, and forsake my foule daughter, you shall just for her, and he that winneth her shall marry her.

Then the Nobles and States of the Empire greatly reioyced, and for the love of that beautifull Damsell they would not onely just, but fight also: so they set a day of battell, & many worthy men were slain on both sides, nevertheless one obtained the victory, & espoused that faire Lady.

The second daughter which was foule and ilfavoured, séeing her sister so bestowed with great solemnity, wept daily, therefore the Emperour her father came to her and said. Deare daughter, why mournest thou thus? Alas deare Father, quoth she,

it is no wonder though I mourne, ſeeing my ſiſter is married with great honour and gladneſſe, and every man is joyfull of her, and no man careth for my company, therefore deare Father what I ſhall doe I know not. Then ſaid the Emperour: O my deare daughter, all that is mine, is thine, and it is not unknowne to thée that hée which married thy ſiſter had nothing with her but her beautifull corps: & therefore I ſhall proclaime in mine owne perſon through mine Empire, that what man will marry thée, I ſhall aſſure him the Empire after my deceaſe by Letters patent. Then this young Lady though ſhée was foule and ilfavoured, nevertheleſſe they reioyced greatly in the promiſe of her Father. Shortly after the Proclamation was thus made, there came a proper and young Knight, which eſpouſed the Lady, and after the death of the Emperour, hée ſeazed upon all the Empire, and hée was crowned Emperour, and ſhée Empreſſe: and after that they lived together a long time in peace and reſt.

The *Morall.*

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which had two

Daughters

Daughters, the one faire, and the other foule, The faire daughter betokeneth the World, which is full faire and delectable to many men. The foule betokeneth poverty and trouble, whom few men desire to marry with. Nevertheless a Proclamation was made by the holy Scripture, that who so would have his faire Daughter, that is the world, should have nothing with her but her fairenesse, that is, the worldly vanities, which fade and fal away like as the beauty of man: but who so will marry the foule Daughter, that is, will voluntarily receive poverty and trouble for Gods love, without doubt hee shall obtaine the Empire of Heaven, according to the Scripture, saying: Yee that have forsaken all things for my love, to follow me, shall have everlasting life.

Many Noble and worthy men have jusked for the faire daughter, that is, have sought and travelled by sea and by land in this world, for coveteousnesse of worldly riches, and at length there be many slaine: for there is nothing here but pride of life, Covetousnesse of the eyes, and of the flesh, where through these grievous sinnes all the world is put to great dammage and mischiefe. So he that married the faire

Daughter, that is, the World, is hée, that ſetteth all his affections and whole deſire upon the wretchedneſſe and vanities of this wicked world, and will not by any meanes forſake this vaine world, like a wretch. But hée that marrieth the foule daughter is the good Chriſtian man, which for the love of the Kingdome of Heaven, and the everlaſting ioyes thereof, forſaketh all this world, & not onely doth thus, but alſo deſpiſeth himſelfe, obeying the true and everlaſting God in all things. Such a man certainely ſhall obtaine the toyfull and happy Empire of Heaven: Unto the which bring us our Lord Jeſus Amen.

The Argument.

Devotion, *Prayer*, and Thankeſgiving unto God for his gifts, is a ſweet ſounding Muſick, delectable in the eares of God. We are hereby warned after our firſt offending not to returne to our vomit, with the Dog, nor after waſhing, with the ſow to wallow in the mire: no rather let us bathe our ſelves in the Well of ſorrowfull and hearty repentance, in perſeverance in good life, that we may live with Chriſt in everlaſting joy and bliſſe.

The 29. History.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt a mighty Emperour named Andromicha, the which above all things loved Musicke, This Emperour had within his Castle a Well of such vertue, that whosoever were drunke, by drinking the water thereof, should incontinently become fresh againe, and be delivered from all kinde of dizines, There was also dwelling in the Emperours Court a Knight named Ydronie, whom the Emperour loved much, but oftimes he would be drunke, which vice the Emperour hated above all things. And when this Knight perceived himselfe drunke, then would he goe to the well and drinke of that water and so refresh himselfe, so that whatsoever the Emperour said to him hee would answer him so reasonably, that no drunkenesse might bee seene in him, and for his witty answers hee was greatly beloved of the Emperour. Nevertheless his fellows sought to draw the Emperours love from him.

It fortuned on a day that this Emperour went to the Forrest where hee heard a Nightingale sing right pleasantly: oftentimes after hee would rise early in the

morning, and sometime from his meate and walk into the wood to heare her swæt song: wherefore many of his men said among themselves: our Lord delighteth so much in the Nightingals song, that hé reckoneth nothing our profit, insomuch that through two things his love is withdrawne from us, that is, by Ydrony the Knight, and by the swæt song of the Nightingale. Then said an old Knight that was among them: Sirs quoth hé if you will follow my counsell, I shall deliver you of the Knight Ydrony, and of the Nightingale without hurt or death. Then they answered & said, whatsoever you advise us to doe, we shall straightway fulfill it with all our hearts. When this Knight heard this, within a while after he chanced to espye this Knight Ydrony drunke, wherefore he locked fast the well, so when this Knight Ydrony came to refresh himselfe he found the Well fast locked.

Now the Emperour had a great businesse to treat of, wherefore in haste he sent for this Knight, because of his great wisdome to have his counsell. And when he came before the Emperour, he was so drunk that he could not move his tongue, neither had wit, reason nor understanding

to

to answer the Emperour to his matter.

But when the Emperour saw this, he was greatly vexed, for asmuch as he hated that vice: wherefore he commanded anon that from that day forward he should noe more be seene within his land upon paine of death.

This hearing his foes they rejoyced, and said unto the old Knight: Now wee bee delivered of this Knight Ydrony, there is no more to doe, but that wee may finde a way to bee delivered also of the Nightingale, in which the Emperour delighted much.

Then said the old Knight, your eares shall heare, and your eyes shall see this Nightingale shall be destroyed shortly.

Not long after, this old Knight espied that the Nightingale used to sit upon a tree even above the foresaid Well, whereas her Mate came and coupled with her, nevertheless in the absence of her Mate, shee took oftentimes another Mate & coupled with him: When shee had thus done, then would she descend to the well to bathe her selfe, that when her Mate came hee should feele no savour nor evill sent of that shee had done. When the Knight had seene this, on a time he locked the well & when

the

the Nightingale would have descended to bathe her selfe, after the coupling with the other Mate, she found the Well closed: wherefore shee flew up into the tree againe and mourned sore in her manner, and left her song. Then came her Mate and saw that shee had done against her nature, hee returned againe, and in short time brought a great multitude of Nightingals which slew his Mate, and tare her all in pieces.

And thus was the wise Knight put away, and the Nightingall slaine, and the Emperour put from his pleasure, and disappointed of the great comfort hee was wont to have.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which loveth greatly the Song of devotion, for when wee pray we speake unto God, and when wee reade God speaketh unto us. The Well that was in the Pallace betokeneth acknowledging of our sins to God. Therefore if any be drunke with sinne, let him drink of the Well of acknowledging of his sinnes, and without doubt hee shall be safe. This Ydronie betokeneth every man that wilfully returneth againe to sin after

after his acknowledging sinne, like as the Dog that maketh a vomit, and casteth up the meate that he hath eaten before, and afterward when hée is hungry, commeth and eateth it againe. Nevertheless, if a man that hath thus sinned, will drink of the Well of acknowledging his sinne, hée shall receive his ghostly strength. The Nightingale that sate on the trée, betokens the soule that sitteth on the trée of holy doctrine. And her song betokeneth the Soule that sitteth on the trée in devout prayers to God. But this soule doth commit evill as oft as shée consenteth to sinne. Nevertheless, if she run to the Well of acknowledging of sin, and bathe her with the water of contrition, God shall love her.

But her foes, that is, the fiends of hell, séeing this, that God is mercifull, they stop the well of acknowledgement of sin, that is, they would withdraw us from dutifull acknowledgement, and from due reconciliation of our selves betwéene us and God, and between us and man, without shame and dread of repentance, not to declare our sinnes. And thus through the temptations of the Devill our adverversary, many have béene exiled and put to death everlastingly. And therefore study

we

wee to bathe our ſoules in this life in the well of acknowledgment of ſinne, with the water of contrition, and then we ſhall be ſure in the world to come to have joy everlaſting. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soule of every good Chriſtian man ought to prepare armed vertues for to withſtand the aſſaults of the Devill. We are here put in minde of our deliverance from death by the precious b'oud-ſhed of Ieſus Chriſt: which is a terror to all the Devils in hell, if we continue in faith and beleeve in him, the bulwarke of our ſalvation.

The 21. Hiſtory.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Hermes, which had a mighty ſtrong City exceeding ſtrongly walled about, and a Bell hanging in the midſt of the ſaid City, & whenſoever the Emperour went to any battell without the City this Bell was ever rung, but there did no man ring the Bell, but a Virgin. Within ſhort time after it befell that Dragons, Serpents, and alſo ma-

ny

ny other venemous Beasts imprisoned much people, so that the City was almost destroyed: wherefore the States of the City went with one assent to the Emperour, and said: Lord what shall we doe? Loe, our people, our goods, and our City is almost destroyed, and you and we be in perill to perish, through these cruell beasts that consume us, therefore take we good counsell, or else we are undone. Then said the Emperour, what thinke you is best to bee done in this matter, and how may we bee best defended? Then answered one of the wisest and said: My Lord heare my counsell, and doe thereafter, and you shall not repent it. You have in your Pallace a Lyon, and set up a peece of timber for the purpose, and thereunto let the Lyon be nailed and made fast, and when other venemous beasts see him thus used they will be afraid, and forsake our City, and wee shall be in safetie. Then said the Emperour, it pleaseth me well that he be so used, thereby to save you. Then they tooke the Lyon and used him in like manner as aforesaid, which when the other beasts saw, they fled away for feare, and never more afterwards durst they come thither.

The

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betoken-eth the Father of Heaven, the Citie well walled, with her Bell in the midſt betoke-neth the Soule walled about with ver-tues. The Bell betokeneth a cleane Con-ſcience that warneth a man to Battell, when hée ſhould fight againſt the Devill that hée might arme himſelfe before with vertues. The Virgin, that ſhould alwayes ring this Bell is Reaſon, which as a Vir-gin inclineth unto all rightfull cleanneſſe. The venemous Dragon that beareth the fire, betokeneth the fleſh of man, which beareth the fire of Covetouſneſſe, which burnt Adam our fore-father, when he eate of the forbidden Apple. The venemous Beaſt that poyſoned the men, betokeneth the fiends of hell, which for the moſt part have deſtroyed all mankinde, The ſtates of the City betoken the Patriarkes and Prophets, which beſought God of coun-ſell and remedy, that mankinde might be ſaved, and anon it was counſelled for the beſt remedy that a Lyon (that is) Chriſt ſhould be nayled upon the Croſſe, acco-rding to the Scripture. ſaying thus, It was requiſite that one man ſhould dye for the

people

people, least all flesh should perish. Then took they Christ, and hung him on the Crosse, for the which the Devill dreadeth Christian people, & dares not come nigh them. And thus by the grace of God, Christian men shall come to everlasting blisse. Unto the which bring us the Lambe of God, which shed his precious blood for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Here is signified the thraldome of man unto Sathan by sinne, till Christ the Sonne of God descended, with the power of the holy Ghost, to set him at liberty, and put him in possession of the pallace of everlasting felicity.

The 30. History.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt a mighty Emperor and a mercifull, named Menelay, who ordained such a Law that what nocent person were taken and put in prison, if he might escape & come to the Emperors palace, he should be there safe from all manner accusations against him in his life time. It was not long after, but it befell that a Knight was accused, wherefore he was taken and put in a strange & darke

prison

priſon where he lay long time, and had no light but at a little window, whereat ſcant light ſhon in, that lighted him to eate ſuch ſimple meate as was brought him by his kæper: wherefore he mourned greatly, and made ſorrow that he was thus faſt ſhut up from the ſight of men. Neverthelesſe when the kæper was gone, there came daily a Nightingale in at the windowe, and ſung full ſwætly, by whoſe ſong this woefull Knight was oft times fed with ioy, & when this bird ceaſed off her ſong, then would ſhe flie into the Knights boſome, and there this Knight fed her many a day of the victuall that God ſent him. It befell after upon a day, that the Knight was greatly deſolate of comfort. Neverthelesſe the bird that ſate in his boſome, fed upon kernels of nuts, and thus hæ ſaid to the Bird: ſweet Bird I have ſuſtained thæ many a day, what wilt thou give me now in my deſolation to comfort me? remember thy ſelfe well how that thou art the creature of God, and ſo am I alſo, and therefore helpe me now in this my great næd.

When the Bird heard this, ſhee flew forth from his boſome, and tarryed from him thræ dayes, but the third day ſhe came

againe

againe, and brought in her mouth a precious stone, and laid it in the knights bosome. And when she had so done, she took her flight, and flew from him again. The knight marvelled at the stone, and at the Bird, and forthwith he took the stone in his hand, and touched his gyves and fetters therewith, and presently they fell off. And then he arose and touched the doores of the prison, and they opened, and so he escaped and ran fast to the Emperours Pallace. When the keeper of the prison perceived this, he blew his horne thrice, and raised up all the folke of the City, and led them forth, crying with an high voyce: Loe, the theefe is gone, follow we him all. And with that he ran before all his fellowes toward the knight, and when he came nigh him, the knight bent his bow, and shot an arrow, wherewith he smote the keeper in the lungs and slew him, and then ran to the Pallace, where he found succour against the Law.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, who ordained a law that what innocent, that is, what person imprisoned wrongfully, and might escape and come to the Pallace of his hea-

venly habitation through repentance and true amendment of life, should find perpetuall succour and help. This knight betokeneth every one that is innocent, and accused by envy or malice unjustly, taking griefe for his present estate. The keeper of this prison betokeneth the Divell, that keepeth such a man hard bound by sin, and serveth him with riches and delights of this transitory world, that he should not escape from danger.

The Bird that singeth so sweetly, betokeneth the voice of heaven, that saith to the oppressed: Turn again, now turn again thou Prisoner, that is, turn againe thou oppressed, and I shall receive thee to grace. For when mankind was in thraldome to Satan in the prison of hel, then came there a Bird, that is, the god-head, bearing with him a stone, that betokens our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the holy Scripture, saying: I am a stone.

The soule of Christ descended with the God-head, and brought with him all mankind out of the prison of hell, therefore if any of us bee in the prison of worldly oppression, touch we our sins with the stone, that is, with the vertue of our Lord Jesus Christ, by acknowledging our sins in

faithfull

faithfull Prayer, and by true contrition, and then without doubt the chaines of our oppression, with the stone, shall be broken and fall from us and the doores of heavenly grace shall be opened, and we shall obtaine help and succour in the Palace of the heavenly habitation.

And if the keeper of the prison, that is, the Devil, (which is the blower of the horn of pride, lechery, or covetousnesse) stir in us any sins, then turn we again towards him manfully, and shoot at him the arrow of constant faith in Jesus Christ, by true and unfained repentance, and without doubt he shall flie from us: and then by the grace of Almighty God, we may obtain the Palace of heavenly blisse where we shall behold the King of all glory. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

A poore man exalted to dignity, is here admonished not to be unthankfull, and to render evill for good: but even to the most simple ones to be gratefull for any benefit, else surely God that gives thee this promotion, will make the brutish creatures of the earth thy enemies, and dispose thee from thy dignity, and hee

that hath helped thee, be he never ſo baſe, may in the end have better favour with God and man then thy ſelf; wherefore bee warned of ingratitude by this example, and know thy ſelfe, thy God, and thy friend.

The 29. Hiſtory.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Ebolides. It fortuned on a day that this Emperour, walked into a great Forreſt to take his pleaſure, where hee met ſuddenly with a poore man, and ſo ſoon as this Emperour ſaw him, hee was greatly moved with mercy, and ſaid: Good friend, whence art thou? My ſoveraign Lord, quoth hee, I am your ſubject borne in your Land, and am now in great poverty. Then ſaid the Emperour: If I knew that thou wert true in every thing I would promote thee to great riches, therefore tell me, what is thy name?

My Lord, quoth he, I am called Lentulus, and I promiſe you to doe you true ſervice, and if I doe otherwiſe, I ſubmit my ſelfe unto all manner of puniſhment that you can put me to. When the Emperour heard that, he promoted him incontinently

to

to great riches, and shortly after he made him a Knight, and Steward of his Land. And when hee was thus exalted to honour he waxed very proud, insomuch that he despised both his superiours and inferiours. Not long after this Steward rode by a forrest where he met with the Foster & charged him that hee should make an hundred pits in the ground, & cover them over with grœn grasse and small boughes, that if wild beasts fortuned to goe to the Forrest that way, they might fall in, and so being taken be brought to the Emperour. The Foster answered & said: Sir, as you have said it shall be done. Not long after it fortuned that this Steward rode to this Forrest againe to see if these pits were made, and as he rode, he bethought himselfe how wealthy a man, and how mighty in power he was made, and how most men in the Empire obeyed him, and were at his command. As he rode thus thinking, he said to himselfe: There is no God save only I; and with that he smote his horse with the spurs, and suddenly he fell into one of the deep Pits, that he himselfe had ordained before for the wild beasts, and for the great deepnesse thereof he could not rise againe by any manner of meanes, wherefore he

languished in great perplexity: & straight-way after him came a fierce Lyon, and fell into the same pit, & after the Lyon an Ape, and after the Ape a Serpent. When the Steward was thus beset with these beasts he was exceedingly afraid.

Then was at that time dwelling in that City a poore man named Guy, that had no riches save only an Asse, whereon daily he carried sticks and wood that fell from trees, and such as he could get in the forrest, and those he brought to the market and sold them: and in this wise sustained himselfe and his wife as long as he might.

It fortuned that this poore Guy went to the Forrest as he was wont, & as he came by a deep pit, he heard a man cry and say, O deare friend, what art thou? for Gods sake help me, and I shall recompence thee so well, that thou shalt ever after be the better. When this poore Guy heard that it was the voyce of a man hee marvelled greatly, and stood still on the Pits brink, and said: Lo, good friend I am come, why hast thou called me? Then said the Knight Deare friend, I am Steward of all the Emperours Land, and thus by fortune I am fallen into the Pit, and here be with me three beasts, that is, a Lyon, an Ape, and

and an horrible Serpent, which I feare most of all, and I wot not of which of them I shall be devoured: therefore I pray thee get a long Rope, wherewith thou mayst draw me out of this deep pit, and I will make thee rich for ever hereafter: for if I have not help the rather, I shall be devoured of these cruell beasts.

Then said this poore Guy, I may full ill at this time intend to help thee. For I have nothing to live on, but that I gather wood, and carry it to the market to sell, wherewith I am sustained. Nevertheless I will leave my purposed labour, and fulfill thy will, and if thou reward me not, it will bee great hinderance to me, and to my poore wife. Then the Steward made a great oath and said, I will promote thee and all thine to great wealth. Then said Guy, if you will perform your promise, I shall doe what you command mee. And with that he went againe to the City and bought there a long rope, and came to the pit againe, and said:

Sir Steward, loe here I let down a rope to thee, binde thy selfe about the middle therewith, that I may pull thee up. Then was the Steward glad, and said: Good friend let down the rope: and with

that he cast the end of the rope down into the pit. And when the Lyon saw it, hee caught the rope and held it fast, and Guy drew up the Lyon, weening in himselfe he had drawn up the Steward: and when hee had so done, the Lyon thanked him in his manner, and ranne to the wood. The second time that Guy let down the rope, the Ape leapt to it, and caught it fast, and when he was drawn up he thanked Guy in his manner, and ranne to the wood. The third time he let down the rope, he drew up the serpent, which thanked him & went to the wood. Then the Steward cryed with an high voyce: O dear friend, now I am delivered of these three ravenous Beasts, let down the rope to me that I may come up. Then this poore Guy let down the rope, and the Steward bound himself fast about the middle, and Guy drew him up. And when hee was thus holp out of the pit, he said to Guy as followeth.

Come to me to morrow to the Palace, and then I will reward thee. Then poore Guy rejoyced thereat, & went home without any reward. Then his wife demanded of him why he gathered no wood whereby they might live that day. Then told he her of the event as it befell, how

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the Steward fell into a pit, (and also the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent) that he had made in the said Forrest, and how hee had holpen him out with a rope and saved him from being devoured of the three venemous beasts: & that he should goe to the Steward, and fetch his reward on the morrow. When his wife heard this she rejoyced greatly, and said: if it shall be so, I pray you rise to morrow at a due houre, and go to the Palace, and receive your reward, that we may be comforted thereby.

So in the morning Guy arose, and went to the Palace, and knocked at the gate: then came the Porter, and asked the cause of his knocking. I pray thee, quoth this Guy, goe to the Steward, and say to him that here abideth a poore man at the gate that spake with him yesterday in the Forrest. The porter went and told the Steward as the poore man had said. Then said the Steward, goe you againe and tell him that he lyeth, for yesterday spake I with no men in the forrest, and charge him that he go away and trouble me no more. The porter went forth and told poore Guy what the Steward had said, and charged him to goe away. Then was this poore Guy sorrowfull, and went home, and when he was

come

come home, hee told his wife how the Steward anſwered him. His wife comforted him in all that ſhe might, and ſaid: go you again and proue him thrice. Then on the morrow, this Guy aroſe and went to the Palace againe, praying the porter to doe his errand once againe to the Steward: The porter anſwered, I ſaid gladly would I doe the errand, but I feare me ſeeze it will be to thy hurt, then went he in and told the Steward that this poore man was again returned. When the Steward heard that, he went out, and all to beat poore Guy, and left him in perill of death. When his wife heard this ſhe came with her Aſſe and led him home as ſhe might, and all that ſhe had, ſhe ſpent on Surgeons and Phiſitians to help him. And when he was perfectly whole, he went to the Foreſt as hee was wont for to gather ſticks and ſmall wood for her liuing. And as he went in the Foreſt he ſaw a Lyon driuing before him ten Aſſes that were laden with rich Jewels, and marchandiſe. This Lyon drove forth the Aſſes before Guy, which feared him ſore, leſt he ſhould haue deuoured him, nevertheleſſe when he beheld the Lyon better, he knew well that it was the ſame Lyon that he drew out of the pit.

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This Lyon left not Guy till all the Asses with the marchandise were entred into his yard, and then the Lyon did him obeysance, and ran to the wood.

Then Guy searched the fardels, and found great riches therein, wherefore hee made Proclamation in divers Churches, if any man had lost such goods, he should have them againe, but there was none that challenged them. And when Guy saw this he sold the goods, and bought therewith house and land and so was made rich. Nevertheless he went to the Forrest, as he did before. And as he was in the Forrest gathering wood, he spied the Ape on the top of a tree, breaking boughes busily with her teeth and clawes, and throwing them down, so that in short time Guy had loaded his Asse. And when the Ape had so done, shee went her way, and Guy went home.

Now Guy on the morrow went to the Forrest again, and as he sat binding his fagots, he saw the Serpent that he drew out of the pit, come toward him bearing in her mouth a precious stone of three colours, which she let fall at Guyes feet, and when shee had thus done she kissed his foot and went her way. Then Guy took up the

stone

Stone; and marvelled greatly of what vertue it might be: wherefore he rose up, and went to a Jeweller named Peter and said: Deare Brother, I pray thee tell me the vertue of this precious Stone, and I shall reward thee for thy labour. When this Jeweller had well beheld and understood the nature of the stone, he said: Good friend, if thou list to sell the stone I shall give thee an hundred marks for it. Then said Guy, I will not sell the stone till thou tell me truly the vertues thereof. Then said the Jeweller, without doubt this Stone hath three vertues: the first vertue is, that whosoever beareth this Stone about him shall have joy without sorrow, the second vertue is, that hee shall have plenty without want: the third vertue is, he shall have light without darknesse: and it hath also another vertue, that no man may sell it but forasmuch as it is worth and if he doe the contrary, the Stone returneth again to the first owner. When Guy heard this, he was right joyfull, and said to himselfe, in a good houre I drew these beasts out of the pit.

Not long after it befell that this Guy by the vertue of this Stone was in de passing rich, and bought great possessions and

livings,

livings, wherefore within a while he was made Knight. It was not long after but the Emperour had knowledge how Sir Guy had a stone of such vertue, wherefore he sent for Sir Guy, commanding him to come to him in all haste, and so he did. And when Sir Guy was come to the Emperor, the Emperour said to him: My friend, I have heard say, that sometime thou wert in great poverty, and now thou art made rich by the vertue of a little stone, therefore I pray the that thou sell me that stone: Sir Guy answered and said, that may I not doe, for so long as I have that stone, I am sure of three things, that is, of joy without sorrow, plenty without want, and light without darkness. When the Emperour heard this, he had a greater desire to buy the stone then he had before, and said to him: Sir Guy, of two things thou must chuse one, that is, whether thou wilt forsake this Empire, and all thy kindred, or else sell me the stone. Then said Sir Guy My Lord, if it must needs be thus, be it at your will. Nevertheless I shall tell you the property of this stone, if you pay not for it as it is worth, without doubt it will come to me againe. Then the Emperour said, surely I will give sufficient, for thou

shalt

ſhall receiue of me therefore a thouſand pound, and ſo it was done Sir. Guy receiued the money and went home.

On the morrow early he opened the coffer, and found the ſtone, and then he ſold to the Lady his wife, how hee had found in his coffer the ſtone which he ſold to the Emperour. Then ſaid his wife, good Sir, haſte you unto the Emperour againe, and giue him the ſtone, leſt he be diſpleaſed, & through malice repute ſome deceit in us.

Then went forth Sir Guy againe to the Emperour, and ſaid to him: My Lord, yeſterday I ſold you a ſtone, which if it pleaſe you I would faine ſee. The Emperour went for the ſtone to his Treaſury but found it not, wherefore he was right ſorrowfull, and came againe and told Sir Guy how it was loſt. Then ſaid Sir Guy, My Lord grieue you not: for I told you yeſterday that I might not ſell it except I had the value thereof, and yeſterday I receiued a thouſand pound of your therefore, and this day I found it in my coffer againe and therefore if I had not brought the ſtone again, peradventure you would haue ſhewed me your heavie countenance, and with that he ſhewed forth the ſtone, whereat the Emperour marvelled greatly, and

ſaid

said Sir Guy, by the faith that thou owest to me, tell me how thou commest by that stone. Then said Sir Guy, by the faith that I owe to you, I shall tel you the very truth as touching this stone. Your Steward that is promoted up of nought, caused many deep pits to be made in your forrest, and it fortuned that he not long after fel into one of them himself, and through the deepnesse thereof could not rise again. It chanced also the same day, that a Lion, an Ape, and a Serpent fel into the pit with him, at which time I was a very poore man, and tooke great pains for my living, and as I walked into the Forrest with mine Asse to gather wood, hee cryed to me that I should helpe him out of the pit, & save him from death, for there were in the pit with him three venemous beasts, that is, a Lion, an Ape, and a foule Serpent, and then he promised me by his word, to promote me and all my kindred to great riches. Which when I heard I was right glad, and let downe a rope unto him, supposing to have drawne him up, and haled a Lion, and after that an Ape, and after a Serpent, and at the last your Steward.

The Lyon gave mee ten Asses laden with merchandize, the Ape gave me as much

much wood as mine asse might beare, and the serpent gave me this stone that I have sold you, but your Steward beat me and wounded me so sore for my good will, that I was borne home upon mine asse.

When the Emperour heard this, his heart was moved greatly against the Steward, wherefore he examined him of that false deed: but he was dumbe, and would not speake, for so much that hee could not deny his ingratitude.

Then said the Emperor: O thou wretched creature, unreasonable beasts as the Lion, the Ape, and the Serpent, rewarded him for his good deed, and thou that art a reasonable man hast almost beaten him to death that saved thee, and took thee out of the pit, therefore for thy falshood and wickednesse I judge thee to be hanged this day on the gallowes, and all thy goods and lands I grant to Sir Guy, and also I ordaine that Sir Guy shall occupy thy place, and be my Steward: and so it was done. When Sir Guy was thus rewarded by the Emperour, and made Steward, he was well beloved of every man as long as hee lived, and at the last ended his life with honour in peace.

The Morall.

This Emperour betokeneth the Father of heaven, the poore man betokeneth every man that commeth into this World, and at last is promoted to great riches and worldly honour, as the Psalmist saith: God lifteth the poore man out of the myre. But many such men neither know God nor themselves, but cause deepe pits to be made, that is, unkindnesse and malice, they ordaine against simple men, into the which pit the Devill oft causeth them to fall, according to the Text in Ecclesiasticus: Who maketh a pit for another man, himselfe falleth therein: which Text was well proved by Haman, who caused the gallowes to be set up for Mordecheus, but was hanged thereon himselfe. This Guy that went daily to the Forrest with his Asse to gather wood, betokens every just and godly man, fearing God in the Forrest of this world: his wood that he gathereth, betokeneth his faith and good workes, which he carrieth upon his Asse, humane endevour, wherewith his soule may joy and live in the tabernacle of heaven. And as the Steward, the Lion, the Ape, and the Serpent fel into the pit, right so a sinfull man falleth into the pit of sin:

But the Lyon of the Tribe of Iuda (that is Iesus Christ) descended with him as oftentimes as the sinner hath will to come to grace. Therefore, saith the Psalmist, I am with him in tribulation. This Guy draweth up the Lyon, that is, mans Soule out of the the pit, by the cord of vertues: Hee drew up the Ape also, that is, contrary will to reason, that he may obey to reason. For of all manner of beasts the Ape is most like to man, right as among all the strengths of the soule, discretion ought to be linked with reason, and to obey reason. Hee drew up also a Serpent, by which is to bee understood repentance, for two causes: for as the Serpent beareth in his mouth venome; and in his taile a medicine: right so, repentance beareth at the beginning bitternesse to the doer, yet it is sweet and medicinable unto the Soule at the end, and therefore every just man should draw to him the Serpent of repentance. Then at the last he drew up the Steward from the pit of sin, according unto Christs saying, I am come not onely to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Also it is written, that Seneca, the Philosopher taught an Emperour many lawes and vertues

of

of truth, and at last as this steward did, he sought the death of Seneca. Also Christ gave power to Iudas to work miracles, as he did to the other Disciples, yet he betrayed him at last: Right so, now adayes many children of Belial delight more to doe harm then good, specially to them that would instruct them perfectly both for the soule and body.

The Lyon gave to the just and godly poore man to Asses laden with marchandise: that is, our Lord Jesus Christ gives unto every righteous man ten Commandements charged with vertues, by which he groweth to the riches of Heaven. The Ape also gathereth him wood as oft as the just man worketh the fruits of faith: for wood necessarily is profitable for two uses that is, to make fire, and to build houses.

Even so charity rejoyceth God and Angels in heaven, according to the Scripture More joy is among Angels for one sinner that repenteth, &c. Charity also raiseth the house of Heaven: against the comming of the soule. The Serpent also gave him a stone of three divers colours, which betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, whom wee seek by Repentance. Therefore saith Saint Ierome in his second Table thus:

We should repent us after our shipwrack. That Christ is the Stone, may be proved by himselfe saying; I am a living Stone, Christ hath three colours, which betoken the power of the Father, the wisdome of the Sonne, and the humility of the holy Ghost: Therefore, who so may get this precious stone, shall have the Empire of heaven, joy without sorrow, plenty without want, and light without darkneſſe. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

By the Nativity of Christ proceedeth joyfull gladneſſe to the world and salvation unto mankinde. Yet is man unthankfull unto God, contrary to his promiſe made in Baptiſm. Wee are warned in all wordly tempeſts continually to cleave to Christ by Faith and Hope, to continue in wel-doing, and to withſtand the malice of the Devil: the Preachers of Gods word are ſent of God to confouud the Devil by ſound doctrine, and good life. Life and death is ſet before men: we ought then to chuſe that life that may be for our everlaſting comfort.

The

The 32. History.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Anselme, who had married the Kings daughter of Ierusalem, a faire Lady and a gracious in the sight of every man, but shee was long time with the Emperor ere shee bare him any child, wherefore the Nobles of the Empire were very sorrowfull because their Lord had no Heir of his own body begotten. Till at last it befel that this Anselme walked after supper in an evening, into his garden, and bethought himselfe how he had no Heire, and how the King of Ampluy warred on him continually, for so much as he had no Son to make defence in his absence, therefore hee was sorrowfull and went to his chamber and slept. Then he thought hee saw a vision in his sleep, that the morning was more clear then it was wont to be, & that the Moon was much paler on the one side then at the other. And after he saw a bird of two colours, and by that bird stood two beasts which fed that little bird with their heat. And after that came many more beasts, & bowing their breasts toward the bird, went their way. Then came there divers birds that sung so sweetly and plea-

ſantly that the Emperour awaked. In the morning early this Anſelme remembred his viſion, & wondred much what it might ſignifie, wherfore he called to him his Philoſophers and alſo the States of the Empire, and told them his dream, charging them to tell him the ſignification thereof, upon paine of death, and if they told him true interpretation thereof, hee promiſed them great reward. Then ſaid they: deare Lord, tell us your dream, and we ſhall declare unto you what it betokens. Then the Emperour told them from the beginning to the ending, as it is aforeſaid. When the Philoſophers heard this, with glad chear they anſwered and ſaid: Sir, the viſion that you ſaw betokeneth good, for the Empire ſhall be clearer then it is.

The Moon that is more pale on the one ſide then on the other, betokeneth the Empreſſe that hath loſt part of her colour, through the conception of a Son that ſhe hath conceived. The little bird betokeneth the ſonne that ſhee ſhall beare. The two beaſts that fed this bird betoken the wiſe and rich men of the Empire, which ſhall obey the Sonne. Theſe other beaſts that bowed their breſts to the Bird, betoken many other Nations that ſhall doe him homage.

homage: The bird that sang so sweetly to this little Bird, betokeneth the Romans, who shall rejoyce and sing because of his birth. This is the very interpretation of your dreame.

When the Emperour heard this, hee was right joyfull. Soone after that, the Empresse travelled in child-birth, and was delivered of a faire sonne, at whose birth there was great and wonderfull joy made.

When the King of Ampluy heard this, he thought in himselfe thus: Loe, I have warred against the Emperor all the dayes of my life, & now he hath a son, who when he commeth to full age, will revenge the wrongs I have done against his Father, therfore it is better that I send to the Emperour and beseech him of truce and peace, that his sonne may have nothing against me when he commeth to manhood. When hee had thus said to himselfe, he wrote to the Emperour, beseeching him to have peace. When the Emperour saw that the King of Ampluy wrote to him more for feare then for love, he wrote again to him, that if he would find good and sufficient sureties to keep the peace and bind himselfe all the dayes of his life to doe him service and homage, and to give him yearly a cer-

toin tribute, he would receive him to peace.

When the King had read the tenor of the Emperors Letter, hee called his Councel, praying them to give him counsell how hee might best doe as touching this matter. Then said they, It is good that ye obey the Emperours will and commandement in all things. For first, in that hee desired of you surety for the Peace: to this we answer thus; We have but one Daughter, and the Emperour one son, wherefore let a marriage be made betwen them, & that may be a perpetuall Covenant of Peace. Also he asketh homage and tribute which it is good to fulfil'. Then the King sent his messengers to the Emperour, saying that hee would fulfill his desire in all things, if it might please his highnesse that his Son and the Kings daughter might be married together. All this well pleased the Emperour, yet he sent again, saying, if his daughter were a clean virgin from her birth unto that day, he would consent to that marriage. Then was the King right glad, for his daughter was a clean virgin.

Therefore when the Letters of Covenant and compact were sealed, the King furnished a fair ship wherein he might send his daughter, with many noble Knights,

Ladies,

Ladies, and great riches, unto the Emperour for to have his sonne in marriage.

And when they were sayling in the Sea toward Rome, a storme arose so extremly and so horribly, that the ship brake against a Rock, and they were all drowned, save onely the young Lady, which set her hope and heart so greatly on God that she was saved. And about three of the clock the tempest ceased, and the Lady drave forth over the waves in that broken ship which was cast up againe: but a huge whale followed after ready to devoure both the ship and her. Wherefore this young Lady when night came smote fire with a stone, wherewith the ship was greatly lightned, and then the Whale durst not adventure towards the ship for feare of the light. At the Cock crowing, this young Lady was so weary of the great tempest and trouble of the Sea, that she slept, and within a little whyle after the fire surceased & the Whale came and devoured the Virgin. And when she awaked and found her selfe swallowed up in the Whales belly, she smott fire, and with a knife wounded the Whale in many places, and when the Whale felt himself so wounded, according to his nature, he began to swim to Land.

There

There was dwelling at that time in a country nære by, a noble Earle, named Pirris, who for his recreation walking on the sea-shore, saw the Whale comming towards the land, wherefore he turned home again, and gathered a great many of men and women, and came thither againe, and fought with the Whale, and wounded him very sore, and as they smote, the Mayden that was in his belly cryed with an high voyce, and said; O gentle friends, have mercy and compassion on mée, for I am a Kings Daughter, and a true virgin from the houre of my birth to this day. When the Earle heard this, he wondred greatly, and opening the side of the Whale found the young Lady, and took her out. And when she was thus delibered she told him forthwith whose Daughter she was, and how shé had lost all her goods in the Sea, and how she should have béene married unto the Emperours sonne. And when the Earle heard this he was very glad, and comforted her the more, and kept her with him till shé was well refreshed. And in the meane time he sent messengers to the Emperour, letting him to know how the Kings daughter was saved.

Then was the Emperour right glad of her

her safety & comming, and had great compassion on her, saying: Ah good maiden for the love of my son, thou hast suffered much wo: nevertheless if thou be worthy to bee his wife, soone shall I prove. And when he had thus said, hee caused three vessels to be brought forth: the first was made of pure gold well beset with precious stones without, & within full of dead mens bones, and thereupon was ingraven this Posey, Who so chuseth me, shall finde that he serveth. The second vessell was made of fine silver, filled with earth and wormes, and the superscription was thus: Who so chuseth me, shall finde that his nature desireth, The third vessell was made of Lead, full within of precious stones, and thereupon was insculpt this Posey: Who so chuseth me, shall finde that God hath disposed for him. These three vessels the Emperour shewed to the Maiden, & said: Lo here daughter, these be rich vessels, if thou chuse one of these wherein is profit to thee and to others, then shalt thou have my sonne. And if thou chuse that wherein is no profit to thee nor to any other, soothly thou shalt not marry him.

When the Maide heard this, shee lift up her hands to God & said. Thou Lord, that

that knowest all things, grant mée grace this houre ſo to chuſe, that I may receiue the Emperours ſonne. And with that ſhée beheld the firſt veſſell of gold which was engraven royally and read the ſuperſcription: Who ſo chuſeth mee, &c. ſaying thus: though this veſſell be full pretious, and made of pure gold, neuertheleſſe I know not what is within, therefore my deare Lord, this veſſell will I not chuſe.

And then beheld ſhe the ſecond veſſell, that was of pure ſilver, and read the Superſcription; Who ſo chuſeth mee ſhall finde that his nature deſireth, Thinking thus within her ſelfe, if I chuſe this veſſell what is within it I know not, but well I wot there ſhall I finde that nature deſireth and my nature deſireth the luſt of the fleſh, and therefore this veſſell will I not chuſe.

When ſhe had ſéene theſe two veſſels and had giuen an anſwer as touching them, ſhe beheld the third veſſell of Lead, and read the ſuperſcription; Who ſo chuſeth me, ſhall find that God hath diſpoſed. Thinking within her ſelfe, this veſſell is not very rich, nor outwardly pretious, yet the ſuperſcription ſaith; Who ſo chuſeth me ſhall finde that God hath diſpoſed

and

and without doubt God never disposeth any harme, therefore by the leave of God, this vessell will I chuse.

When the Emperour heard this, he said: O faire Maiden open thy vessell, for it is full of precious stones, and see if thou hast well chosen or no. And when this young Lady had opened it, she found it full of fine gold and precious stones, as the Emperour had told her before. Then said the Emperour: Daughter, because thou hast wisely chosen, thou shalt marry my Son. And then hee appointed the wedding day and they were married with great solemnity, and with much honour continued to their lives end.

The Morall.

This Emperour betokeneth the father of heaven who was long time without a naturall Son, therefore many men were in danger of perishing in hell. The Empresse conceived when the Angel Gabriel said: Lo, thou shalt conceive and beare a Child, And then the firmanent began to cleare when this little child lightned the world with his birth. The moone began to wax pale when the face of the Virgin Mary was over-shadowed by vertue of the

grace

grace of the holy God, and not only her face was thus ſhadowed but alſo her body, for ſhe was conceived with Child as another woman, wherefore Ioſeph would have forſaken her privily and gone away. This little Bird that came from the one ſide of the Wone, betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who at midnight was born of the Virgin Mary, wrapped in cloathes, and laid in an Ore ſtall. The two beaſts betoken the Ore and the Aſſe that Ioſeph brought with him which honoured him in his Birth. Theſe other beaſts that came from farre betoken the Shepheards in the field, to whom the Angel ſaid thus: Loe, I ſhew you great joy. The birds that ſung ſo ſweetly, betoken the Angels of Heaven, which ſung at his birth this joyfull ſong: Glory be to God above, and peace to men on earth.

The King of Ampluy, which held was againſt the Emperor, betokeneth all mankinde, that were contrary to God as long as they were in the devils power. But immediately, when our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was born, he bowed himſelfe to God, and beſought him of peace when he received his baptiſm, for at our baptiſm we promiſed to draw onely to God, and forſake

the

the Devill and all his pompe. The King gave his daughter in martage to the Emperors son. Right so every one of us ought to give his soul in marriage to Gods Son, for he is alwayes ready to receive our soule as his spouse, according to the Scripture, saying thus: I will marry thee to mee. But ere our soule may come to the Pallace of Heaven, she must saile by the Sea of the world, in the ship of good life: but oftentimes there riseth a tempest in the sea, that is, trouble of this world, the temptations of the flesh, and the suggestion of the Devill ariseth suddenly and drowneth the vertues that the Soule received in Baptisme, nevertheless yet falleth she not out of the ship of Charitie, but keepeth her selfe surely therein by Faith and Hope. For as the Apostle saith, By Hope we be saved. For it is impossible to bee saved without Hope or Faith. The great Whale that followeth the Mayden, betokeneth the Devill, which by night and by day lyeth in wait to overcome the Soule by sin: therefore do we as the Mayden did, smite we fire of Charity and Love out of the Stone that is, Christ, according to this saying, I am a Stone, and certainly the divell shall have no power over us. Many

men

men begin well, as did the Maid, but at the laſt they be weary of their good workes, and ſo they ſléep in ſin. And anon when the Diuell perceiueth this, hee deuoureth the ſinner in his euill thoughts, delights, conſent, and workes. Therefore if any of us fél our ſelues in ſuch wiſe vnder the power of the Diuell, let him doe as the Maiden did, ſmite the Diuell with the knife of bitter repentance, then kindle the fire of Charity, and without doubt he ſhall caſt thée on the land of good life.

The Earle that came with his ſeruants to ſlay the Whale, betokeneth a diſcreet Preacher, which dwelleth beſide the Sea, that is, beſide the world, and not in the world, that is, not drawn to worldly delectation, but euer is ready with good words of holy Scripture, to kill the Deuill, and to deſtroy his power. We muſt all cry with an high voyce, as the Maiden did, knowledging our ſins, and then ſhall we be deliuered from the Deuill, and nouriſhed with vertuous exerciſe.

The Emperour ſheweth this Mayden three veſſels, that is, God putteth before man, life & death, good and euill, and which of theſe he chooſen he ſhall obtaine. Therefore ſaith Salomon, Death and life is ſet

before

before man, choose which him list, And yet man is uncertaine whether he will choose life or death.

By the first vessell of Gold full of dead mens bones, is understood mighty worldly rich men, who shine like gold outwardly in riches and pomp of the world, nevertheless within they be full of dead mens bones, that is, the works they have done in this world, bee dead in the sight of God through deadly sinne. Therefore if any man chuse such a life, he shall have that he deserveth, that is, such men be like unto Tombs that be white, and royally painted and arrayed without, and covered with cloath of gold and silk, but within there is nothing but dry bones. By the second vessell of silver, we ought to understand some Justices, and wise men of this world, who shine in faire speech, but within they be full of wormes and earth, that is, their faire speech shall availe them no more at the day of Judgement, then the worms of the earth, and peradventure lesse, for then shall they suffer everlasting paine, if they die in deadly sinne. By the third vessell of Lead, full of gold and pretious stones, we are to understand a simple and poore life, which the chosen Soules chose, that they

may be married to our blessed Lord Jesus Christ by humility and obedience, and such men bear with them pretious stones, that is, Faith and her fruitfull works, pleasing to God: by which at the Judgement day, they be espoused to our Lord Jesus Christ, and obtained the heritage of heaven. Unto the which bring us our Saviour Jesus Christ that died on the Crosse. Amen.

The Argument.

Man by Baptisme promised to live in the fear of God, and forsake the Devil. Christ sorroweth for our sins, he requireth dutifull service of us at six severall ages, but we are alwayes unready for him, yet the mercy of God is so favourable towards us, that he spareth us even till the last age of man, vouchsafing if then wee repent us, and call for grace, beleeving in his mercies, to receive us into the Throne of his heavenly grace.

The 33. History.

SOmtime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Calopodus, who tooke a faire Lady to his wife. They were not long together before that this Empres con-

conceiued and bare him a Sonne, a goodly child, and a faire. When he was of age, he was set to Schoole, and when he came to twenty yeares of age, he desired his Fathers heritage, saying: Dear Father you are an old man, and may not govern your Empire, therefore if it please you to give it me, it shall be to your ease. Then answered the Emperour, and said: Dear Son, I dread me sore; that when the Empire is in thy power, thou wilt not fulfill my will nor my desire.

Then answered the Empresse (for so much as she loved her son better then her husband) and said: My Lord, that cannot be, for thou hast but one Son, therefore as I beleeve, he will fulfill thine intent in all things: this Empire may help him well, and therefore it is best to grant him the Empire. Then answered the Emperour and said, I will first have of him a Letter obligatory, that whensoever he doth any thing against my will, that then I will depose him from the Empire without any contradiction.

The Sonne granted this, and did make the Obligation, and sealed it. And when this was done; this young Emperour waxed so proud, that he feared neither God,

nor man, and did very much harme. But ever his Father suffered it patiently, for he would be corrected by no man. Now at last there fell a great death in the Empire, so that many men died for want of food. This old Emperour was all alone himselfe, and began to have need, wherefore he went to his sonne for to have some maintenance, which his sonne granted, and suffered for a time. But within short time his Father began to wax sick, wherefore he called his Son, and prayed him to give him a draught of must. His Sonne answered and said: that will I not do, for my must is not good for your complexion.

Then said the Emperour: I pray thee Sonne give mee a draught of thy wine. His Son answered and said, that he should have none, for my wine is not yet fined, and if I touch it, it will trouble, and therefore I will not broach it till it be cleare & fined. Then said his Father, give me some of the third Tun. That I will not doe, quoth he, for that wine is not good for a sick man. Then his Father prayed him heartily for a draught of the fourth Tun. Then answered he and said, thereof get you none, for it is feeble and without any sustentation, and such wine is not good for you, for it is not com-

comfortable. Then said his Father: now good sonne give me then of the first Tun: That will I not, quoth hee, for that Tun is full of lees and dregs, and such is not for men, nor scarcely for hogs. When his Father saw he might get nothing of him, after he was perfectly well, he went to the King of Jerusalem, and made his complaint of his Sonne, and shewed him the letter obligatory which his Son had made, whereby his father might put him out of his Empire without any gain saying. When the King heard this, he called the Emperours Son to answer his Father: And when he came, he could not answer to his Father with any reason, wherefore the King put him out of his Empire, and seated his Father therein againe: and so hee continued all the dayes of his life.

The Morall.

This Emperour betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ: according to that saying, Is not he thy Father that hath brought thee up, he hath made thee, &c. Deut. 32. verse 6. The Sonne betokeneth man, to whom hee gave all the Empire of this world according to the Scripture, Heaven he hath given to our Lord, and earth to man. Man-

kind made an Obligation with our Lord Jesus Christ, when he received the Sacrament of Baptism, wherein hee promised to serve him truly, and forsake the Devil, and all his pomp and vaine-glory. This Emperour began to wax sick on a day, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ is troubled as oft as a Christian sinneth and breaketh his Commandments, wherefore he thirsts greatly for the help of our soules, and then he asketh a draught of the first Tun, that is, he asks of man the first age of childhood to be spent in his service, but incontinently the wicked Child answereth and saith: I may not doe so, for my Childhood is musty, that is, it is so tender and so young, that it may not attempt so soon to serve God, which is manifestly against the truth, for the child of one day is not without sinne. For S. Gregory in his Dialogues saith, The children of five yeares of age drive out spirits from the bosomes of their Fathers. Then when God seeth that he cannot have of the must of his childhood, then desireth he the wine of the second tun. Then answereth the wicked youth, & saith, that his Wine is not apt to serve God. And when God may not have of the second Tunne, then asketh hee of the third

Tunne,

Tunne, that is of the third Tunne of his youth. Then answered the wicked young man, and saith, The wine is very strong and mighty, & therefore his youth ought to be spent about manly deeds, in this world, and not in good life, which would make him feeble and weak. When God seth that hee may not have of this Tun, then asketh hee of the fourth Tun. And then answereth the wicked man in his manhood, and saith, that aged men are feeble, and may not fast, nor doe any hard repentance, and if he did, hee should be the cause of his own death. Then asketh our Lord of the fift Tun, that is of his old age, when he stoopeth, and may not goe without a staffe. But the wicked old man excuseth himselfe, and saith, That his wine is too feeble to give such a feeble man, for if hee should fast one day, it were time on the morrow to make his grave. And when our Lord seth that he may not have the fifth Tun, then asketh he of the sixth Tun, that is, when a man is blind and may goe to sinne no more, yet desireth he of such a man drink, that is, help of his soule: But the wretched man lying in despaire, saith: Alas, alas, woe is me, because I served not Almighty God my maker and redeemer here in times past,

while I was in youth and in prosperity: now there is nothing left but onely the lees and dregs of wretchednesse, therefore what shall it availe mee now to turne toward God? But for such men wee should lament.

Nevertheless, God is mercifull, that though he might have no service of man in all his time, yet he is content to have the lees of his tunne, that is, the good will, though he may not serve him otherwise, & so shall his good will stand him in stead of patient life. For in what houre the sinner doth repent him of his sinne from the bottome of his heart, he shall be saved, as Ezekiel witnesseth. But there be many that will give no wine, nor no other thing to him, wherefore God shall complaine unto the King of Ierusalem, that is, to the Godhead at the judgement day, and then as hee is God and man, shall hee give a sentence definitive against such men: saying, I have hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I have been naked, and ye cloathed me not: I have thirsted, and ye gave me no drink. Loe, thus shall be rehearse to thee the fruits of thy faith. And when this is done, then shall such men be put to everlasting paine, and the just man into everlasting blisse.

Unto

Unto which, bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Man being captivated by Satan, the world refuseth to do for him, till the God-head of the heavenly Father bearing an earnest affection unto him, did espouse him, and embrace him within the bosome of inward and intire love, adventuring what he might to set all mankind at liberty, yet grudgeth the world that we should alwayes serve our God, and forsake her: but to eschew all such malignity we are taught in this History.

The 34. History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperour named Anthony, under whose raign the robers of the Sea had taken prisoner, a mighty mans son of another Region, and brought him to the Emperours prison being bound. When this young man was thus in prison, he incontinent wrote to his father for his ransome, but he would neither pay his ransome, nor send him any thing for to comfort him: This when he heard, he wept sore, and would not be comforted for the unkindnesse of his father.

This

This Emperour had a fair Daughter, which visited every day the prisoner, and comforted him as much as she might, wishing him to be merry. To whom the prisoner answered and said: How shall I be merry? or how may I joy, thus to lie fast bound in prison from the sight of man? and notwithstanding this, it grieveth me most that my Father will not pay my ransome. When the Maiden heard this, she was moved with pitty, and said: Dear friend, I am sorry for thee, and therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I shall deliver thee from thy anguish and paine. What thing is that quoth he? That thou wilt take me for thy wife. Then said the Prisoner, I promise you surely to fulfill your request and desire, and for the more assurance, I plight you my troth. When he had so done, shortly after the Damosell delivered him out of prison, and fled away with him home to his Fathers house. When his Father saw his son and the Maiden together, he asked the cause why he brought the Maiden with him? Then said his son: Sir, this Damosell delivered me out of Prison, and therefore she shall be my wife. Then said his Father, I will not consent that she shall be thy wife, for two reasonable causes

which

which I shall forthwith shew thee. The first is this, it is not unknown to thee that the Emperour her Father might have had for thy deliverance great plenty of riches, and for as much as she was untrue to her own Father, and true to thee, it seemeth well that thou shouldest not trust long to her: for being false to her own Father, it is to be feared she will not be true to another man. The second reason is this; the cause why she delivered thee out of prison, was neither for pitty nor for love, but for carnall lust that she had to thee. For at thy deliverance she made covenant with thee to be thy wife, and had of thee thy troth, and hath accompanied with thee: therefore son (saith he) it is no reason that she should be thy wife.

The Maiden answered to these objections, and said: as for the first reason that thou layest against me, that I should be untrue to my Father, that is, false; for my Father hath plenty of riches, and thy sonne is but poore, and therefore I help him for pitty and for none other cause: and nevertheless thou that art his Father wouldest not pay his ransome, that he might be delivered out of prison. Lo for this cause I have delivered him, therefore I am kinder to him

then

then thou that art his own Father, and he is more beholding to me than to thee. Unto the other reason: whereas thou sayest that I delivered him because of carnall lust: I answer and say plainly that it is not truth. For all manner of carnall love is caused of strength or else of beauty, but thy sonne is not strong, for his imprisonment hath taken away his strength: he is not fair, for by the paine he hath had in prison, he is brought low, and made unlusty to sport, and therefore pitty only moved me to deliver him, and not carnall lust.

Then said the son: Dear father, for as much as I was in peril of death, and wrote unto you to pay my ransome that I might be delivered, and you would not help me, but this gentle Damesell for pitty hath saved me from death, and delivered me out of prison, therefore surely she shall be my wife. So forthwith he married her with great honour, and with her ended his life.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour betokeneth the Father of heaven. The young man which was taken with the Pyrates of the Sea, betokens all mankind which was taken with the Devill, by the sinne of

our

our forefather Adam, and was cast into the prison of hell with great sorrow and paine. His Father would not ransome him, that is, the world would doe nothing for him. This faire daughter betokeneth the Godhead, which came downe from Heaven; and took manhood of the Virgin Mary, and so made a ghostly marriage between him and man. And upon this condition he delivered mankind out of the prison of Hell, when hee came from Heaven, and forsook the fellowship of Angels for to dwell with us in this wretched vale of teares. But the Father that betokeneth the World grudgeth ever against him, and would not suffer that the soule of man should become the spouse of Jesus Christ, but that shee should alway serve him, and should forsake our Lord.

Therefore if we follow the world and his vanities, certainly we shall fall into the snare of the Devil. From the which defend us our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

It is the ordinance of God, that no man shal labour for worldly promotion by covetousnesse and falshood, nor by deceit or other

or other evill courſes. Man for his firſt tranſgreſſion ſhould have been adjudged to perpetuall torment in hell, had not the Son of God voluntarily offered himſelfe to the death, to ſave mankind, and deſtroy Sathan his enemy, ſo that thereby he might pleaſe him in the habitation of heaven everlaſtingly.

The 35. Hiſtory.

SOmetime in Rome there dwelt a noble Emperour of great livelihood, named Alexander, which above all vertues loved the vertue of Bounty, wherefore he ordained a Law for great charity, that no man under paine of death ſhould turn a Plaice in his diſh at his meat, but only eat the white ſide, and not the black, and if any man would attempt to doe the contrary, he ſhould ſuffer death without any pardon: but yet ere hee dyed, he ſhould aſk three queſtions of the Emperour what him liſt (except his life) which ſhould be granted him.

It befell after upon a day, that there came an Earle and his Son, of a ſtrange Country, to ſpeak with the Emperour. And when the Earle was ſet at meat, he was ſerved with a Plaice, and he which

was

was hungry, and had an appetite to his meat after he had eaten the white side, he turned the black side, and began to eat thereof: wherefore straight-way he was accused to the Emperour, because he had offended against the Law. Then said the Emperour: Let him die according to the law; without any delay. When the Earles son heard that his father should die, immediately he fel down on both his knees before the Emperour, and said: O my reverend Lord, I most humbly intreat you that I may die for my Father. Then said the Emperor: It pleaseth me well, so that one die for the offence. Then said the Earles son, sith it is so that I must die, I aske the benefit of the Law, that is, that I may have three petitions granted ere I die. The Emperour answered, and said: Aske what thou wilt, there shall no man say thee nay.

Then said this young Knight: My Lord, you have but one daughter, the which I desire of your Highnesse, that shee may lye one night with me before I die. The Emperor granted for fulfilling of the law, though it were against his will. Nevertheless, this Knight deflowred her not as that night: therefore he greatly pleased the Emperour.

The

The second petition is this. I aske all thy treasure, and immediately the Emperour granted, because hee would not bee called a breaker of the Law. And when the Earles sonne had received the Emperours treasure, he imparted it both to poore and rich, by meanes whereof hee obtained their good wills.

My third petition is this: I aske my Lord, that all their eyes may be put out incontinent that saw my father eat the black side of the Plaice. Wherefore the Emperour made inquisition immediatly, who it was that saw the Earle turne the blackside of the Plaice. And they that saw him turne the Plaice bethought him, and said within themselves: If wee acknowledge that we saw him do this trespasse, then shall our eyes be put out; and therefore it is better that we hold us still. And so there was none found that would accuse him.

When the Earles sonne saw this, hee said to the Emperour: My Lord quoth he, ye see there is no man accuseth my father, therefore give mee rightfull judgement. Then said the Emperour: For as much as no man will acknowledge that they saw him turne the Plaice, therefore I will not that thy Father shall die. Loe thus the son

saved

saved his fathers life, and after the decease of the Emperour married his daughter.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth the Father of Heaven, which ordained a Law that no man should turne the backside of a Plaice, that is, there should no man labour for riches and promotion by covetousnesse and falshood. The Earle that came to the Emperour betokeneth Adam, our forefather, who came out of the Land of Eden, and turned up the blacke side of the Plaice, when he eat of the Apple of the forbidden tree, wherefore hee should have been condemned to everlasting death: But his Sonne, that betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, hee tooke the flesh of Adam, and proffered himselfe voluntarily to dye for him: And the Father of Heaven granted that he should go downe to dye for mankind.

Nevertheless, before hee dyed hee asked three petitions of his Father of Heaven. The first was this, that hee might have by him his Daughter, which betokeneth the soule of man, and bring her with him into the bosome of heaven, according to the words

words in Osee, saying, I will wed her to my selfe.

The second petition was this, all the Emperors treasure, which betokeneth the treasure of Heaven, according this Scripture: Like as the Father hath disposed for me, so I dispose for you.

The third petition is this, that all their eyes should be put out, that is, that the Devill, and all false witnesses which accuse us true men, might be put from the light of heavenly grace.

And thus saved hee mankind, and led him up with him unto the Pallace of heaven. Unto the which Pallace bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

The Father of Heaven of his meere grace, promoteth some poore men, raising them from the dust to sit among Princes, but they extolling themselves without regard of GODS goodnesse, they are againe made abject by him. The Devill worketh deceit in his members against the Godly, Christ came downe from Heaven to minister the water of eternall life unto man, and by his death and passion to revive our soules, (which before were dead) unto the firme state of eternall

nall felicitie, and to purchase our happinesse with his precious blood.

The 36. Historie.

IN Rome there dwelt sometime a mighty Emperour named Leonicious, who on a day rode to a Forrest to disport himselfe, whereas he met suddenly with a poor man, to whom he said thus: Friend what art thou? and whence commest thou?

My Lord, quoth he, I am come from the next City, and I am your man. Then said the Emperour thou seemest poor, therefore if thou be honest and true, I will promote thee to great riches and honour. Then answered the poore man and said: My Lord, I promise you faithfully to be true to you so long as I live. The Emperour anon made him a knight, and gave him great riches. When he was thus promoted, he waxed so proud, that he thought himselfe more able to be an Emperor then his Lord: wherefore he made suggestion to divers Lords of that Empire, that he might usurp and take upon him through strength of them to be Emperour. When the Emperour heard this, anon he exiled him, and all those that were consenting to him, so that they lived abjects in great wretched-

neſſe and ſorrow: and then the Emperour ordained other men in their ſtead, and gave them all the poſſeſſions of thoſe traytors.

And when the baniſhed men heard that ſtrangers had taken poſſeſſion of their lands and goods, anon they conſpired againſt them, and through treaſon requeſted them to a banquet. And they as innocents thinking upon no ſuch treaſon, came at the day aſſigned, and were ſerved with fine poyſoned meſſes, whereby as many as taſted of thoſe diſhes died incontinent.

When the Emperor heard this, he was greatly moved, and aſſembled his Counſell, to enquire what was beſt to be done for this treaſon, and for their death. Then ſaid the Emperours Sonne: My Lord, I am your Sonne, and you are my Father, and therefore I ſhall give you good counſell and profitable to all men. Not farre hence is a little Nation, wherein dwelleth a faire Maiden and gracious in the ſight of every man, which hath an Orchard wherein is a Well, the water whereof is of ſuch vertue, that if it be caſt upon a dead man, ſtraight-way he ſhall live again and recover his life. Therefore, my Lord, I ſhal deſcend into that Nation, and fetche that water, whereby they that were ſlaine at

the Banquet, may be restored againe to life. And when the Emperour heard this he greatly rejoyced, and said thus: Sonne thy counsell is good.

And straight-way the Emperours Son went into the said Nation, and fell in conceit with the Maiden, in so much that he entred into the garden, and assailed to taste the water of the Well. And when he had so done, he made five serpentines in the ground, in the which the water ranne till it came where the dead men lay buried, hereupon when the water touched them, they arose from death to life. Then the Emperours Son with great joy led them unto his Father. And when the Emperour saw this, he was right joyfull, wherefore he crowned his Son with a Lawrell Crown, in token of victory, and so he ended his life in rest and peace.

The Morall.

Deare friends this Emperour betokeneth the Father of Heaven. The proud man that was promoted, betokeneth Lucifer, that was exalted of nought, and enthroned in the Empire of Heaven with great joy and clearenesse, but through his pride he thought he might be like unto almigh-

tle God: And not only like him, but more then Almighty God: wherefore the Father of Heaven exiled him, and all them that consented to him, to hell: and in his place man was exalted to great joy and honour. The Devill seeing this, it much grieved him, that man should come to such glory and honour, and had Adam and Eve, to a Banquet, when they ate of the Apple, against Gods Commandement, and counselled them thus, saying: In what houre yee eat of the Apple, yee shall be like Gods, knowing good and evil. And at this cursed banquet they were serven with five messes that were poysoned, that is, their five wits were accorded in eating of the Apple, wherof man was infected and dyed. This hearing the Emperors Son Christ Jesus, moved with mercy, he came downe from heaven into this world, and acquainted him so well with the blessed virgin Mary, that he found in her the Well of manhood, and enjoyned it to the Got-head, according to the Scripture: I am the Well of life, who drinketh of it shal not thirst. After that, he suffered to be made five trenches in the ground, that is, five wounds in his body, out of the which ran both blood and water, whereby all mankind was raised

from

from death to life, and led them up into the Pallace of heaven. Unto the which bring us our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

The father of heaven extēdeth his goodnes divers wayes towards frayle man, yet he taketh contrary wayes, living in spirituall fornication, for the which being exiled from the state of felicity, he is compelled to lead a miserable and painefull life. But being reconciled by the death of his Saviour, hee repossesseth the heritage of heavenly felicity.

The 34. Historie.

SOmetime in Rome there raigned a mighty Emperour named Dunstanus, in whose Empire there dwelt a gentle knight that had two sonnes. One of his sonnes matched himselfe against his Fathers will with a common Harlot. The knight hearing this, exiles his sonne from him. And when he was thus exiled, he begot on this woman sonne: And soone after that hee waxed sicke, and in penurie, wherefore he sent messengers to his father, beseeching him of his mercy, this hearing,

his Father, he took compassion and ruth on him, wherefore he was reclaimed from banishment. And when he was thus brought againe to his Fathers grace, he gave his child which he had by the common woman to his Father, who kindly received him, and nourished him as his Son.

When the other Sonne heard this, he said to his Father: Father, quoth he, it seemeth to me that thou art out of thy right mind, which I will prove by good reason. For he is out of his right mind that receiveth a false heire, and nourisheth him, whose Father hath endamaged and grieved him before. Now my brother which begate this Child, hath done thee great injury, when he married the common woman, against thy will and commandment, therefore me thinketh that thou art out of thy right mind.

Then answered the Father and said: because thy brother is reconciled to me, thou art envious, and thou art unkind to thy owne brother, willing to put him from thy fellowship forevermore, but soothly no unkind man shall have mine heritage except he be reconciled, and yet thou never reconciledst thy self to him for thy unkindnesse, for thou mightest have reconciled thy selfe

to

to him, but thou wouldest not, therefore of my heritage gettest thou no part.

The Morall.

Deare friends, the father of these two brethren betokeneth the father of heaven. And his two sonnes betoken the nature of Angels, and the nature of man: For man was married to a common woman or harlot, when he eate the Apple against the Commandement of God, wherefore he was exiled by the father of heaven, and put from the ioyes of Paradise. The son of the common woman betokeneth mankind. This Knights sonne, that is Adam lived in great misery, for after his sinne hee was put from ioy into this wretched valley of teares and weeping, according to the scripture, In the sweat of thy browes thou shalt eate thy bread. But after by the passion of Christ he was reconciled. But the other sonne that betokeneth the divell, was ever unkinde, and grudged daily against our reconciling, saying, that by reason of our sinne wee ought not to come unto the heritage of Heaven: Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The

The Argumene.

We ought in every vocation and calling to behave our ſelves juſtly, and to uſe the poore man with equity: we muſt not injury the rich men. The mighty men are to be honoured, and not defrauded of their dignity and eſtate being men of honeſt life: they that doe contrary to the meaning of dutifull behooſe herein, are worthy of everlaſting death.

The 38 Hiſtory.

SOmtime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour named Donatus, which did make three Images: of the which one held out his hand ſtraight unto the people, and had on his finger a ring of Gold. The ſecond Image had a beard of Gold, And the third had a Mantle of Purple. Commanding upon paine of death, that no man ſhould take away from theſe Images the ring, the beard, nor the mantle.

It befell afterward upon a time, that one Dionyſe a Tyrant, came into the Temple, and tooke away the ring from the firſt Image, the beard from the ſecond, and the mantle from the third. And when he had thus done, hee was forthwith accuſed unto

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the Emperour, and brought before him, and strictly examined of that trespasse, why he dispoyled the Images, against the Emperours commandment.

They answered Dionyse, and said as followeth: My reverend Lord, it is lawfull to answer for my selfe: When I entred into the Temple, the first Image held forth his hand straight to mee, as who would say, I give thee this ring, and therefore I took the ring as the gift of the Image, being loath to refuse so gentle an offer. And when I saw the second Image having a beard, I thought thus with my selfe: I knew sometime the Father of the Image, which had no beard, and now his Son hath a beard, which is against reason, the Sonne to have a beard and the Father none: and therefore I took from him his beard, that hee should be like his Father. After that, when I saw the third having a Mantle of gold, I thought that the mantle of gold was not behovefull for him in winter: for gold is naturally cold, which might be cause of his death, and therefore I took it from him, because it was too cold in winter, and too hot in summer.

When Dionyse had excused him by these reasons, the Emperour answered and said:

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Thou haſt anſwered wickedly for thy ſelfe What ſhould cauſe thee rather then any other man to diſpoile the Images, foraſmuch as I commanded that no man ſhould take any thing away from them, therefore thine owne mouth hath condemned thee. Anone the Emperour called to him one of his Squires, and charged him to ſmite off his head, and incontinently he tooke him, and did unto him as the Emperour had commanded, and ſo he dyed a ſhamefull death.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour betokeneth Almighty God, the Father of heauen. The three Images betoken the powre men, the rich men, & the mighty men of this world. The tyrant Dionyſe betokeneth all officers in every eſtate, lewdly behauing themſelues, which take away from powre men the ring off their fingers, & ſay thus, I may take that is given me. But when the powre man hath ought to doe, he muſt needs put forth his hand to give whether he will or no, if he would ſpeed. They take away the beard from the rich man, and ſay thus: This man is richer then his father was, therefore take we his liuelihood from

from him, and make him like his forefather. They take also the mantle of Gold from the mighty men: when they see any man of honor and good living, willing to correct such open misdoers, then say they this man is too cold, for he inclineth nothing to our opinions, and also he is so hot in power and working against us, therefore goe we and take from him the mantle of might, and so they accuse him and put him out of his office. But certainely, all such men stand in perill of everlasting death: From the which save us, hee that shed his precious bloud for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Man ought to nourish Christ in his heart by faith, and fruits of good life. The reward of such as have care unto the commandements and institutions of God. We must watch lest we fall into temptation: these things considered, we shal then by Gods gracious good providence attaine unto the reward of this heavenly and everlasting blisse.

The 39. History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperour named Emelius, who

who had a faire young Lady to his wife, upon whom he had begotten a faire Son. When the States of the Empire heard this, they came to the Emperour, and beſought him to have the kæping of his Son. Immediately the Emperour ſent a Herald throughout the City, proclaiming that in whoſe houſe were firſt found fire and water, the Good man of that houſe ſhould have have his Son in kæping, and to nouriſh. And then the Emperor made a Proclamation, that whoſoever had his Son to kæpe ſhould nourith him cleanly, and fæd him with wholeſome meats and drinkes. And when the Child came to age, then ſhould the kæper be promoted to great honour; wherefore many men made ready fire and water in hope to have the Child: But in the night when every man was aſlæpe, there came a Tyrant named Sulapius that quenched the fire, and threw out the water. Nevertheleſſe, among all other, there was a man named Ionathas, that laboured ſo diligently that he kept both day and night fire and water.

In a morning early the Herauld at the Emperors commandment, went thorow the City, and ſought in every houſe for fire and water, but hee could find none till

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he came to Ionathas house, where he found both fire and water ready, wherefore he was brought before the Emperor, who deliuered him his Son according to the Proclamation.

When Ionathas had the Emperours Son, he led him home unto the house. And soone after he sent for Masons and Carpenters, and did make a strong chamber of lime and stone. And when the chamber was finished, he sent for Painters to paint on the wall of the Chamber ten Images with this posey painted above their heads, Who so defileth these Images shall dye a cruell death. And then caused a payre of gallowes to be drawne on the doore, and figuring a man hanging thereon with this posey painted above his head: So shall he be served that nourisheth the Emperours Sonne amisse. Also he caused a Chaire of gold to be made, and himselfe sitting therein, crowned with a Crowne of Gold, with this superscription above the head: Who so nourisheth the Emperours Sonne cleanly, thus shall he be honoured.

When this was done, oftentimes as he was asleepe, he was greatly tempted to defile these ten excellent Images, but anon he read the superscriptions above their

heads,

heads, and then all the temptation ceaſed. And when the Emperours ſon was evilly kept, then went hee to the gallowes and read that poſey which was written above his owne head, and for dread thereof kept the child better, and was diligent to give attendance on him.

And when he beheld the chaire and himſelfe ſitting therein, crowned with a crown of gold, he was right joyfull, thinking to have good reward for keeping of the Emperours ſonne. When the Emperour heard of this diligent demeanour about his ſonne, he ſent for him, and thanking him for his wel keeping and nourthing of him, he after promoted him to great honour and dignity.

The Morall.

This Emperour betokeneth the Father of heaven. The Empreſſe betokeneth the bleſſed Virgin Mary. The Emperours ſonne betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The Herauld that was ſent throughout the Citie betokeneth Saint Iohn Baptiſt, who was ſent before our Lord to prepare the way to him, according to the holy ſcripture: Loe, I ſend mine Angell before mee, &c. The ſtates that deſired the Empe-

rours

rours son to nourish, betokens the Patriarkes and Prophets, which desire greatly to nourish our Lord Jesus Christ, and also to see him, but they might not see him, nor nourish him, for fire and water which should have been cause of their sight was not with them perfectly.

The fire betokeneth the Holy Ghost which had not yet appeared to them, for they were not washed with the water of Baptisme. Also ye may understand by the fire perfect Charity, and by the water true Contrition, which doe now adayes fails in many men, and therefore they may not have the little Child Jesus in their hearts.

Ionathas that watched so diligently, betokeneth every good Christian man, which studieth ever to watch in well-doing, yelding to God for sinners the fire of charitable repentance, and the water of contrition. But oftentimes the Tyrant, which betokeneth the Devill, putteth out the fire of charity from out of mens hearts, and casteth out the water of Contrition, so that they may not nourish the little child Jesus. Therefore let us watch as Ionathas did, that we enter not into temptation. And call we unto us Masons, that

is diſcreet Preachers which can make in our hearts a Chamber of ſtone, that is, a ſure Faith and Hope. Then call we to us Painters, that is, Miniſters of Gods word which can paint in our hearts ten Images that is the ten Commandements, which if thou kẽp and obſerve daily, without doubt thou ſhalt be honoured in heaven.

And if thou kẽpe well the Emperours ſonne, thou ſhalt ſit in a Chaire of Gold, crowned with a crowne of Gold. And if that thou nouriſh him not well, without doubt thou ſhalt be in danger of torment in Hell. From the which preſerve us our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soule of man eſpouſed unto Chriſt, the fleſh procureth the ſame to ſin. The Chriſtian ſoule by faith withſtandeth temptation, the Redemption of mankind from ſin and death. The deceits of unthankfull hearts. The ſpirits health the defects of the fleſh. After a pure repentance followeth perpetuall joy and felicity both of ſoule and body

The 40. Hiſtorie.

IN Rome dwelt ſometime a mighty Emperour named Menelay, which had wed-

ded

ded the Kings daughter of Hungary, a fair Lady and a gracious in all her works, and specially she was merciful. On a time as the Emperour lay in his bed, he bethought him that he would goe visite the holy Land. And on the morrow he called to him the Empresse his wife, and his own only brother, & thus he said: Deare Lady, I may not, nor will not hide from you the privities of my heart, I purpose to visit the holy Land, wherefore I ordaine thee principally to be Lady & Governesse over all my Empire, and all my people: And under thee I ordain heere my brother to bee thy Steward, for to provide all things that may be profitable to my Empire and to my people.

Then said the Empresse: Sith it will no otherwise bee, but that needs thou wilt goe to visit the City of Ierusalem, I shal be in your absence as true as any turtle that hath lost her Mate, for as I believe, yee shall not escape thence with your life.

The Emperour anon comforted her with faire words, and kissed her, and after that took his leave of her and of all other, and went toward the City of Ierusalem.

And anon after the Emperour was gone, his brother became so proud, that he

oppreſſed poore men, and robbed rich men, and he did worſe then this, for daily hee ſtirred the Empreſſe to commit ſin with him. But ever ſhe anſwered again, as an holy and devout woman and ſaid: I will quoth ſhe never conſent to you nor to any other as long as my Lord liveth. Nevertheleſſe this Knight would not leave with this anſwer, but ever when he found her alone, hee made his complaint to her and ſtirred her by all the wayes that he could, to ſinne with him.

When this Lady ſaw that hee would not ceaſe for any anſwer, nor would not amend himſelfe, when ſhe ſaw her time, ſhe called to her three or foure of the worthieſt men of the Empire, and ſaid to them thus: It is not unknown to you that my Lord the Emperour ordained me principall Governor of this Empire, and alſo he ordained his brother to be Stewed under mee, and that he ſhould doe nothing without my counſell, but he doth all the contrary: for hee oppreſſeth greatly poore men, and likewiſe robbeth the rich men, and yet he would doe more then this, if he might have his intent, wherefore I command you in my Lords name, that you binde him faſt and caſt him into priſon.

Then

Then said they, soothly he hath done many evill deeds since our Lord the Emperour went, therefore we be ready to obey your commandements, but in this matter you must answer for us to our Lord the Emperour, Then said she: dread yee not, if my Lord knew what he had done as well as I, he would put him to the foulest death that could be thought: Immediately these men laid hands on him & bound him fast with Iron chains, and put him in prison, whereas he lay long time after, till at the last it fortuned there came tidings that the Emperour was comming home, and had obtained great renown and victory. When the brother heard of his comming, he said: Would to God my brother might not find me in prison: for if he doe, hee will enquire the cause of my imprisonment of the Empresse, and she will tell him all the truth, how I moved her to commit sinne, and so for her I shall have no favour of my brother, but lose my life: this know I well, therefore it shall not be so. Then sent he a messenger unto the Empresse, praying her that she would vouchsafe to come to the Prison doore, that he might speak a word or two with her.

The Empresse came to him and enqui-

red of him what he would have. He answered and said; O Lady have mercy upon me, for if the Emperour my brother find me in prison, then shall I die without any remedy.

Then said the Empresse: If I might know that thou wouldest be a good man and leave thy folly, thou shouldest finde grace. Then did he promise her assuredly to be true, and to amend all his trespasse. When hee had thus promised, the Empresse delivered him anone, and made him to be bathed and shaven, and apparelled him worthily according to his estate: and then she said unto him thus. Now good brother take thy Steed and come with mée, that we may mæt my Lord. He answered and said: Lady I am ready to fulfill your will and Commandement in all things. And then the Empresse took him with her, and many other Knights, and so rode forth to mæt with the Emperour: and as they rode together by the way they saw where a great Hart ran before them, wherefore every man with such hounds as they had, chased him on horseback, so that with the Empresse was left no creature save only the Emperours brother, who seing that no man was there but they two, thus

he

he said unto the Empresse: Loe, Lady, here is beside a privie forrest, and long it is ago that I spake to thee of love, come now and consent unto me that I may lie with thee.

Then said the Empresse: Ah fole what may this be? Yesterday I delivered thee out of prison upon thy promise, in hope of amendement, and now thou art returned to thy folly againe, wherefore I say now to thee as I have said before, there shall no man doe such thing with me, save only my Lord the Emperour, which ought of very duty for to doe. Then said he, if thou wilt not consent to me, I shall hang thee here upon a tree in this forrest, where no man shall finde thee, and so shalt thou die an evill death. The Empresse answered meekly, and said: Though thou smite off my head, or put mee to death with all manner of torment, thou shalt never have me consent to such a sinne.

When he heard this, he unclothed her all save her smock, and hanged her up by the haire upon the tree, and tyed her Steed before her, and so rode forth to his fellowes, and told them that a great hoast of men met him, and took the Empresse away from him, and when hee had told them

this, they made all great ſorrow.

It befell on the third day after, there came an Earle to hunt in that Forreſt, and as he rode beating the buſhes, he unkennels a Fox, whom his Hounds followed faſt till they came nære the trée where the Empreſſe hanged. And when the dogs ſmelt the ſavour of her, they left the Fox and ranne toward the trée as faſt as they could.

The Earle ſéing this, wondred greatly and ſpurring his Horſe, followed them till he came whereas the Empreſſe hanged. When the Earle ſaw her thus hanging, he marvelled greatly, for as much as ſhe was right faire and beautifull to behold, wherefore he ſaid unto her in this manner wiſe: O woman who art thou? and of what countrey? and wherefore hangeſt thou here in this manner?

The Empreſſe that was not yet fully dead, but at point ready to die, anſwered and ſaid: I am, quoth ſhe, a ſtrange woman, and am come out of a farre countrey, but how I came hither God knoweth. Then anſwered the Earle & ſaid: Whoſe Horſe is this that ſtandeth by thée bound, to this trée? Then anſwered the Lady and ſaid that it was hers. When the Earle

heard

heard this, he saw well that shee was a Gentle woman and came of noble linage, wherefore he was the rather moved with pitty, and said unto her: O faire Lady, thou semest of gentle blood, and therefore I purpose to deliver thee from this mischiefe, if thou wilt promise to go with me and nourish my faire young daughter and teach her at home in my Castle, for I have no child but only her, and if thou keep her well, thou shalt have a good reward for thy labour. Then said she: as far forth as I can or may I shall fulfill your intent. And when she had thus promised him, he took her down off the tree, and led her home to his Castle, and gave her the keeping of his Daughter that he loved so much, and she was cherished so well, that she lay every night in the Earles chamber, & his daughter with her: and in the chamber every night there burned a lamp, which hanged betwæn the Empresses bed and the Earles bed. This Lady behaved her self so gently, that shee was beloved of every creature. There was at that time in the Earles house a Steward which much loved this Empresse, and often spake to her of his love. But she answered him againe & said: Know yee, deare friend for a certainty, that

that I will never love any man in ſuch manner wiſe, but only him whom I am greatly bounden to love by Gods Commandement.

Then ſaid the Steward: Thou wilt not then conſent unto me. Sir, quoth ſhe, what need you any more to ask ſuch things? The vow that I have made, I will truly keep and hold by the grace of God.

And when the Steward heard this, he went his way in great wrath and anger, thinking within himſelfe, if I may I ſhall be revenged on thee.

It befell upon a night within ſhort time after, that the Earles chamber-doore was forgotten & left unſhut, which the Steward had anon perceived: And when they were all a ſleep, he went and ſpyed by the light of the Lamp, where the Empreſſe and the young mayden lay together, and with that he drew out his knife, & cut the throat of the Earles daughter, and put the bloody knife into the Empreſſes hand, ſhe being aſleep, and nothing knowing thereof, to the intent that when the Earle awaked he ſhould ſee the knife in her hand, and that hee ſhould think that ſhee had cut his Daughters throat, and ſo ſhe ſhould be put

put to a shamefull death for his mischievous deed. And when the Damsell was thus slaine, & the bloudy knife in the Empresse hand, the Countesse awaked out of her sleep, and saw by the light of the Lamp the bloudy knife in the Empresse hand, wherefore she was almost out of her wits and said to the Earle: O my Lord, behold in yonder Ladies hand a wonderfull thing.

Anone the Earle awaked and looked towards the Empresses bed, and saw the bloudy knife, as the Countesse had said: wherefore he was greatly moved and cryed to her and said: Awake woman out of thy sleep, what thing is this that I see in thy hand? Then the Empresse through his cry awaked out of her sleep, and in her waking the knife fell out of her hand, and with that shee looked by her, and found the Earles daughter dead by her side, and all the bed be sprinkled with bloud, wherefore with an high voyce she cryed, and said: alas, alas, and wo is me, my Lords daughter is slaine.

Then cryed the Countesse unto the Earle with a pitious voyce, and said. O my Lord, let this devilish woman be put to the foulest death that can be thought, which

which thus hath ſlaine our only child.

Then when the Countelle had ſaid thus to the Earle, he ſaid to the Empreſſe in this wiſe. The high God knoweth that thou miſchievous woman haſt ſlaine my Daughter with thine own hands, for I ſaw the bloody knife in thy hand, and therefore thou ſhalt die a foule death. Then ſaid the Earle in this wiſe: O thou woman were it not I dread God greatly, I ſhould cleave thy body with my ſworo in two parts, for I delivered thee from hanging, and now thou haſt ſlaine my daughter, nevertheleſſe for mee thou ſhalt have no harme, therefore goe thy way out of this City without any delay, for if I finde thee heare after this day, thou ſhalt die a moſt cruell death.

Then aroſe this wofull Empreſſe and did on her cloathes, and after leapt on her Palfray and rode toward the Eaſt alone without any ſafe conduct. And as ſhe rode thus mourning by the way, ſhe eſpied on the left ſide of the way, a paire of Gallowes, and ſeven officers leading a man to the Gallowes to be hanged, wherefore ſhee was moved with great pitty, and ſmote her horſe with her ſtick, and rode to them, praying them that ſhee might redeeme

deeme that misdoer if hee might be saved from death by any meanes.

Then said they Lady, it pleaseth us well that you redeem him. Anon the Empresse accorded with them, and payed his ransome, and he was delivered.

Then said shee to him: Now my good friend, be true unto me till thou die, sith I have delivered thee from death.

On my soule (quoth he) I promise you ever to be true. And when he had thus said, hee followed the Lady still, till they came nigh a City, and then said the Empresse to him: Good friend, quoth she, goe forth thy way afore mee into the City and see then take up for us an honest lodging, for there I purpose to rest awhile. Her man went forth as shee commanded, and took up for her a good lodging and a honest, where she abode along time. When the men of the City perceived her beauty, they wondred greatly, wherefore many of them craved of her unlawfull love, but all was in vaine, for they might not speed in any wise. It fortuned after upon a day, that there came a ship full of merchandise, and arrived in the Haven of that City. When the Lady heard this, she said unto her servant: Goe to the ship and see if there

be any Cloath for my use. Her servant went forth to the Ship, whereas he found many very fine cloathes: wherefore he prayed the master of the ship that he would come into the City and speak with his Lady. The master granted him, and so the servant came home to his Lady before and warned her of the comming of the Master of the Ship. Soon after the Master of the ship came and saluted the Lady courteously: the Lady received him according to his degree, praying him that she might have for her money such Cloath as might be profitable for her wearing. Then hee granted that she should have any that liked her, and soone they were agréed, wherefore the servant went immediately againe with the Master of the ship for the Cloath. And when they were both within on shipbord. The Master said to the Ladies Servant. My dear friend, to thee I would open my counsell if I might trust to thee, and if thou help me, thou shalt have of me a great reward.

Then answered he and said: I shall (quoth he) be sworn to thee to keep thy counsell, and fulfill thy intent as farre forth as I can.

Then said the Master of the ship, I love thy

thy Lady more then I can tell thée, for her beauty and feature is so excellent, that I would give for the love of her all the gold that I have: and if I may obtain the love of her through thy helpe, I will give thee whatsoever thou wilt desire of me.

Then said the Ladyes servant: tell me by what meanes I may best helpe thee. Then said the Master of the Shippe, Goe home to thy Lady againe, and tell her that I will not deliver to thee the Cloath, except shee come her selfe: and doe thou but bring her to my ship, and if the wind bee good and fit, then I purpose to lead her away. Thy counsell is good, quoth the Ladyes servant, therefore give me some reward, and I shall fulfill thy desire.

Now when he had received his reward, he went againe to the Lady, and told her, that by no meanes the Master of the Ship would deliver him the Cloath except shee came her selfe. The Lady beleeved her servant, and went to the Ship. Now when she was within the ship-board, her servant abode without.

When the Master saw that she was within the ship, and the wind was good, he drew up the sayle and sayled forth.

When the Lady perceived this, thus

she

she said to the Master: O Master (quoth shee) what reason is this that thou hast done to me? The Master answered, and said: Madam, certainly it is so, that I must needs lye with thee, and afterward espouse thee. O good Sir, quoth she, I have made a vow that I shall never commit such sinne but with him unto whom I am bound by right, and by the Law. Soothly, quoth hee, if yee will not grant mee with your good will, I will cast you out into the midst of the sea, and there shal yee dye an evill death: If it be so, quoth shee, that I must needs consent, or else dye, first I pray thee to prepare a private place in the end of the ship, whereas I may fulfill thine intent ere I dye; and also I pray thee that I may say my prayers unto the Father of Heaven that he may have mercie on mee.

The Master beleeved her, wherefore he did ordaine her a Cabbin in the end of the ship. Wherein shee kneeled downe on both her knees and made her prayers, saying on this wise: O thou my Lord God, thou hast kept me from my youth in cleanesse, keepe me now that I be not deflowred, so that I may serve thee ever with a cleane heart and mind, and let not this

wicked

wicked man prevaile with mee, nor any other the like wickednesse come nigh mee. When shee had ended her prayers, there arose suddenly a great tempest in the Sea, so that the Ship all to brast, and all that were therein perished save the Lady, and she caught a Cable and saved her selfe, and the Master caught a bord of the Ship, and saved himselfe likewise: nevertheless she knew not of him, nor hee of her, for they were driven to divers coasts. This Lady landed in her owne Empire, neare to a rich City, wherein she was honourably received, and shee lived so holy a life, that God gave her grace and power to heale sick folk of all manner of diseases, wherefore there came much people to her, both crooked blinde, and lame, and every man through the grace of God and her good endeavour was healed: wherefore her name was knowne through divers Regions. Nevertheless shee was not knowne as the Empresse. At the same time the Emperours brother (that had hanged her before by the haire) was smitten with a foule Leprosie. The knight that slew the Earles daughter, and put the bloody knife in her hand, was blinde, deafe, and had the Palsie. The Theefe that betrayed her unto her Master

of the ship was lame and full of the cramp. And the Master of the ship distraught out of his wits.

When the Emperour heard that so holy a woman was in that City, hee called his brother, and said to him thus: Goe we, deare brother, unto this holy woman that is dwelling in this City, that shee may heale thee of thy Leprosie. Would to God, O noble brother (quoth hee) that I were healed. Anon the Emperour with his brother went towards the City. Then when the Citizens heard of his comming, they received him honourably with procession, & all provision fitting his estate. And then the Emperour enquired of the Citizens, if any such holy woman were among them that could heale sick folk of their disease. The Citizens answered and said, that such an one there was. Now at the same time was come to the same City the Knight which slew the Earles daughter, and the Theefe which she saved from the gallowes, and the Master of the Ship, to be healed of their diseases.

Then was the Empresse called forth, before the Emperour, but she muffled her face as well as shee could, that the Emperour her Husband should not know her,

and

and when she had so done, she saluted him with great reverence, as appertained to his state, and he againe in like manner, saying thus: O good Lady, if thou list of thy kindnesse to heale my brother of his Leprosie, ask of me what you will, and I shall grant it thee for thy reward.

When the Empresse heard this, she looked about her, and saw there the Emperors brother a foule Leper: she saw there also the Knight that slew the Earles daughter blind and deafe, the Theefe that she saved from the Gallowes lame, and also the Waster of the ship distraught out of his wits, and all were come to her for to be healed of their maladies, & knew her not, but though they knew her not, she knew them well. Then said she unto the Emperour thus: My reverend Lord, though you would give me all your Empire I cannot heale your brother nor none of these other, except they acknowledge openly what great evill they have done.

When the Emperour heard this, he turned him towards his brother, and said unto him: Brother, acknowledge openly thy sinne before all these men, that thou mayst be healed of thy sickenesse. Then anon he began to tell how he had led his

life, but he told not how he had hanged the Empreſſe in the Foreſt by the haire of the head, moſt deſpightfully.

When hee had acknowledged all that him liſt, the Empreſſe replied, and ſaid: Soothly my Lord, I would gladly lay unto him my medicine, but I wot right well it is in vaine, for hee hath not made a full confeſſion.

The Emperour hearing this, he turned toward his brother, and ſaid in this wiſe: what evill, ſorrow or other unhappy wretchednesſe is in thée, ſæſt thou not how that thou art a foule Leper? therefore knowledge thy ſin truly, that thou mayeſt be whole, or elſe avoyd my company for evermore.

Ah my Lord, quoth hæ, I may not tell my life openly, except I be firſt ſure of thy grace. What haſt thou treſpaſſed againſt me, quoth the Emperour? Then anſwered his brother, and ſaid. Mine offence againſt thée is grievous, and therefore I aſk thée, heartily forgivenes. The Emperor thought not on the Empreſſe, for as much as hæ ſuppoſed ſhæ had bæne dead many yæres before, therefore hee commanded his brother to tell forth wherein hæ had offended him, and he ſhould be forgiven.

When the Emperor had thus forgiven his

his brother, he began to tell openly how he had desired the Empresse to commit adultery with her, and because shee denied, hee had hanged her by the haire in the Forrest on such a day.

When the Emperour heard this, he was almost beside himselfe, and in his rage he said thus: O thou wretched creature, the vengeance of God is fallen upon thee, and were it not that I have pardoned thee, thou shouldest die the most shamefull death that could be thought.

Then said the Knight that slew the Earles Daughter: I wot not, quoth hee, what Lady you meane, but I wot that my Lord found on a time such a Lady hanging by the haire in the Forrest, and brought her home to his Castle, and he took her his daughter to keepe, and I provoked her as much as I could to sinne with mee, but she would in no wise consent to me, wherefore I slew the Earles Daughter that lay with her, and when I had so done, I put the bloudy knife in the Ladyes hand, that the Earle should think she had slaine his daughter with her own hand, and then was shee exiled thence, but where she became I wot not.

Then said the Thiefe: I wot not of

what Lady yée meane, but well I wot that ſeaven Officers were leading mée to the Gallowes, and ſuch a Lady came riding by and bought mée of them, and then went I with her, and afterward I betrayed her unto the Maſter of the ſhip.

Such a Lady (quoth the Maſter of the Ship) received I, and when we were in the middeſt of the Sea, I would have laine with her, but ſhe knéeled down to her prayers, and anon there aroſe ſuch a tempeſt, that the ſhip all to braſt, and all therein were drowned ſave thee and I, but afterward what befell of her I wot not.

Then cryed the Empreſſe with a loud voyce, and ſaid, Sothly deare friends, yée doe now truly confeſſe and declare the truth, wherefore I will now apply my medicine, and anon they received their healths.

When this Lady the Empreſſe had thus done, ſhée uncovered her face to the Emperour, and he forthwith knew her, and ranne to her and embraced her in his armes, and kiſſed her oftentimes, and for joy he wept bitterly, ſaying: Bleſſed be God, now I have found that I deſired. And when he had thus ſaid, hée led her home to the Palace with great joy, and after when it

pleaſed

pleased Almighty God, they ended both their lives in peace and rest.

The Morall.

Deare Friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. This Empresse betokeneth a holy Soule: This Emperours brother betokeneth the flesh, to whom our Lord hath given charge of the Empire, but most principally to the soule. Nevertheless, the wretched flesh oft provoketh the Soule to sinne, but the Soule that loveth God above all things, withstandeth that temptation, calleth to her, her ghostly power, that is, Reason, Will, Understanding, and Conscience, and maketh them to imprison the flesh that is disobedient to the Soule, in the prison of true repentance, unto the time he obey to reason in all things.

And thus in hope of mercy he sinneth againe: to whom the holy Writer saith: Cursed be that man that sinneth in hope: And at the last the Soule enclineth to the flesh, and letteth him out of the prison of repentance, and washeth him from the filth of sinne, and arrayeth him with good vertues, and maketh him leape on the Pal-

fray of charitable humility, and ſo rideth forth to mete our Lord with the ſacrifice of thanks-giving. But alas, full oft the ſinner treſpaſſeth againſt holy Scripture, wherefore the heart, that is, the luſt of the fleſh ariſeth before him, and after runneth great Hounds, that is, evill thoughts, and ſo long they chaſe, till the body and the Soule be left alone, and then the fleſh ſtirreth that pure ſoule, being the ſpouſe of Almighty God: but the pure and undefiled Soule that is ſo well beloved with God, will not forſake our Lord, and conſent to ſinne: wherefore the wretched fleſh full oft deſpoyleth her of all her clothing, that is, of all her vertues, and hangeth her up by the haire on an Oake, that is, on luſts and delights, and there ſhe hangeth till the good Earle commeth, that is, a diſcreet Preacher in the Foreſt of this world to preach and teach the word of God: then he taketh her downe and leadeth her forth to the Church, to nouriſh his Daughter, that is, to nouriſh conſcience with fruitfull Faith. The Earle had in his Chamber a Lamp: right ſo every diſcreet Preacher ſhould have before him the Lamp of holy Scripture, whereby he may ſee both the grievance and profit of

the

the Soule in learning of vertues and putting away of vice. The Steward that stirreth her to sinne, is nought else but pride of life, which is Steward of this world, by whom many men be deceived. But when the Soule that is so well beloved with Christ, will not consent unto the sinne of pride, then taketh this evill Steward the knife of Covetise, wherewith he slayeth the Earles daughter, that is, Conscience, according to Scripture, saying: Gold and silver hath blinded the eyes of Iudges, and hath overthrown wise men, so that equity and righteousnesse might not enter, but stood a farre, and turned their backs. This Lady also redeemed a man from death, that is, from everlasting death, which he had deserved by deadly sinne: Therefore doe we as did this Lady, smite we our horse, that is, our flesh, with the spurres of repentance, and so ride we forth in all hast to save our neighbour from the sink of deadly sinne, to help him both bodily and ghostly, as Solomon saith.

Woe bee to that man lying in deadly sinne, that hath no man to lift him out thereof. Therefore awake thy neighbour and help him. For a brother that is holpen

pen of another, is like a ſure City, and if he give but a cup of cold water in the way of help, he ſhall not loſe his reward.

But many now a dayes be very unkind, as was the Theefe which deceived the Lady, after that ſhe had ſaved him from hanging. The Maſter of the Ship betokeneth the World, by whom many men be deceived. But nevertheleſſe, as oft as a Man taketh on him voluntarily the charge of Charity, and obeyeth unto the Commandements of God, and forſaketh the world, then breaketh he the Ship. For it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, and man, and the world, all at one time.

When this Lady had eſcaped the tempeſt of the Sea, ſhe went to a City, that is, the Soule, after the troubles of this world, went to the holy life, and there ſhe healed all manner of ſick folk, that is, every man that is troubled in his ſoule, that is, infected with divers ſickneſſes, thoſe this Lady healed through holy life.

But they could not be healed till they had firſt confeſſed their ſinnes unto the Empreſſe the Church of God, and then ſhe healeth them by repentance and amendment of life: yet all this while was the Empreſſe unknowne to her husband, that

is,

is, the Church wandreth in the wilderneſſe of this wicked world, untill God by miraculous meanes made her known unto him, and so led her home by victory and triumph in the truth unto the heavenly habitation of eternall reſt and glory, unto the which, Almighty God bring us all for his Sonnes ſake. Amen.

The Argument.

Every ſupreame Magiſtrate and other inferiour, is to be honoured and reverenced. *Every* true Chriſtian man ought to conſider his duty herein, and every falſe Chriſtian perverting the wayes of the Godly, the reward of ſuch is layd up in hell, But the juſt ſhall inherit the bleſſed life everlaſting.

The 41. Hiſtory.

IN Rome ſometime dwelt a mighty Emperour named Martin, which for intire affection kept with him, his brothers Sonne, whom men called Fulgentius. With this Martin dwelt alſo a Knight that was Steward of the Empire, and Uncle unto the Emperour, which envied this Fulgentius, ſtudying day and night how he might bring the Emperour and

this

this youth at debate. Wherefore the Steward on a day went to the Emperour, and said My Lord, quoth hee, I that am your true servant, am bound in duty to warne your highnesse, if I heare any thing that toucheth your honour, wherefore I have such things that I must needs utter it in secret to your Majesty betweene us two: Then said the Emperour, Good friend, say on what thee list.

My most deare Lord (quoth the Steward) Fulgentius your Cosin, and your nighkinsman hath defamed you wonderfully and shamefully throughout all your Empire, saying, that your breath stinketh, and that it is death to him to serve you of your Cup. Then the Emperour was grievously displeased, and almost beside himselfe for anger, and said unto him thus: I pray thee my good friend tell me the very truth, if that me breath stinketh as he saith. My Lord (quoth the Steward) ye may beleeve mee, I never perceived a sweeter breath in my dayes than yours is. Then said the Emperour, I pray thee good friend tell me how I may bring this thing to good prowfe.

The Steward answered, and said: My Lord (quoth hee (ye shall right well understand

derstand the truth, for to morrow next when he serveth you of your Cup, ye shall see that hee will turne away his face from you, because of your breath, and this is the most certaine proofe that may bee had of this thing. Verily, quoth the Emperour, a truer proofe cannot be had of this thing. Therefore anon when the Steward heard this, hee went straight to Fulgentius, and tooke him aside, saying thus: Deare Friend, thou art neare kinsman, and also Nephew unto my Lord the Emperour, therefore if thou wilt bee thankfull unto me, I will tell thee of the vice whereof my Lord the Emperour complaineth oft, and thinketh to put thee from him (except it bee the sooner amended) and that might be a greater reproofe to thee. Then said this Fulgentius, Ah good Sir, for his love that died upon the Crosse, tell mee why my Lord is so sore moved with mee, for I am ready to amend my fault in all that I can or may, and for to be ruled by your discreet counsaile,

Thy breath (quoth the Steward) stinketh so sore, that his drinke doth him no good, so grievous unto him is the stinking breath of thy mouth. Then said Fulgentius unto the Steward: Truly, that perceived

perceiued I neuer till now, but what think you of my breath, I pray you to tell me the very truth? Truly (quoth the Steward) it ſtinketh greatly and foule: And this Fulgentius beleeued all that he ſaid, and was right ſorrowfull in his minde, and prayed the Steward of his counſell, and help in this wofull caſe. Then ſaid the Steward unto him, if that thou wilt doe my counſell, I ſhall bring this matter to a good concluſion, therefore doe as I ſhall tell thee.

I counſell thee for the beſt, and alſo warn thee, that when thou ſerueſt my Lord the Emperour of his Cup, that thou turne thy face away from him, ſo that he may not ſmell thy ſtinking breath, untill the time that thou haſt prouided thee of ſome remedy therefore.

Then was Fulgentius right glad, and ſware to him that he would doe by his counſaile.

Not long after, it befell that this young man Fulgentius ſerued his Lord as he was wont to doe, and therewith ſuddainly he turned his face from his Lord the Emperour as the Steward had taught him.

And when the Emperour perceiued

the

the avoyding of his head, he smote this young Fulgentius on the breast with his foot, and said to him thus: O thou lewd Harlet, now I see well it is true that I have heard of thee, and therefore goe thou anon out of my sight, that I may see thee no more in this place. And with that this young Fulgentius wept full sore, and avoyded the place, and went out of his sight.

And when this was done, the Emperour called unto him his Steward, and said: how may I rid this Harlet from the World, that thus hath defamed me? My most deare Lord, quoth the Steward, right well you shall have your intent.

For here beside, within these three miles ye have Brick-makers, which daily make great fire for to burne Brick, and also they make Lime, therefore my Lord send to them this night, charge them upon paine of death, that whosoever commeth to them first in the Morning, saying to them thus: My Lord commandeth you to fulfill his will, that they take him and cast him into the Furnace, and burne him: and this night command you this Fulgentius, that he goe early in the morning, to your Work-men, and that hee

aske

aske them whether they have fulfilled your will which they were commanded, or not, and then shall they according to your commandement, cast him into the fire, and thus shall he die an evill death.

Surely, quoth the Emperour, thy counsell is good, therefore call to me that Varlet Fulgentius. And when the young man was come to the Emperours presence, he said to him thus: I charge thee upon pain of death, that thou rise early in the morning, and goe to the burners of Lime and Brick, and that thou be with them early before the Sunne rise, three miles from this house, and charge them in my behalfe that they fulfill my commandement, or else they shall die a most shamefull death.

Then spake this Fulgentius: My Lord, if GOD send mee my life, I shall fulfill your will, were it that I shall goe to the Worlds end.

When Fulgentius had this charge, he could not sleepe for thought, that hee must arise early for to fulfill his Lords commandement. The Emperour about midnight sent a messenger on horse-back unto his Brick-makers, commanding them upon paine of death, that whosoever came to them first in the morning, saying

unto

unto them, (as before is rehearsed) they should take him, and bind him, and cast him into the fire, and burn him to the bare bones.

The Wick-makers answered, and said, it should be done. Then the messenger returned home againe, and told the Emperour that his commandement should be diligently fulfilled.

Early in the morning following, Fulgentius arose, and prepared him towards his way, and as he went he heard a Bell ring to Service, wherefore hee went to heare service, and after the end of Service he fell asleepe, and there he slept a long while, so that the Priest nor none other might awake him.

The Steward desiring inwardly to heare of his death, about one of the clocke he went unto the work-men, and said unto them thus: Sirs, quoth he, have ye done the Emperours commandment or no?

The Wick makers answered him and said: May truly, we have not yet done his commandement, but it shall be done, and with that they laid hands on him. Then cried the Steward, and said: good Sirs save my life, for the Emperour commanded that Fulgentius should be put to death.

Then said they, the Messenger told us not so, but he bad us that whosoever came first to us in the morning, saying as you have said, that we should take him and cast him into the Furnace, and burn him to ashes: and with that they threw him into the fire.

And when he was burnt, Fulgentius came to them, and said: Good Sirs, have you done my Lords commandement, yea, soothly said they, and therefore goe ye againe to the Emperour, and tell him so. Then said Fulgentius, for Christs love tell me that commandement.

We had in commandement, said they upon paine of death, that whosoever came to us first in the morning, and said like as thou hast said, that we should take him and cast him into the furnace: But before thée, came the Steward, and therefore have we fulfilled on him the Emperours commandement, and now he is burnt to the bare bones.

When Fulgentius heard this, hé thanked God that he had so preserved him from death, therefore he took his leave of the workmen, and went again to the Palace.

When the Emperour saw him he was almost distract of his wits for anger, and thus hé said: Hast thou been with the

Brickmakers

Brickmakers and fulfilled my commandement? Soothly my gracious Lord, I have been there, but or I came there, your commandement was fulfilled. How may that be true quoth the Emperour?

Forsooth said Fulgentius, the Steward came to them afore mee, and said that I should have said, so they took him and threw him into the Furnace, and if I had come any rather, so would they have done to mée, and therefore I thank God that hath preserved me from death.

Then said the Emperour, tell me the truth of such questions as I shall demand of thee. Then said Fulgentius to the Emperour: You never found in me any falsehood, and therefore I greatly wonder why ye have ordained such a death for me? for well ye know that I am your own Brothers sonne. Then said the Emperour to Fulgentius: It is no wonder, for that death I ordained to thée through counsell of the Steward, because thou didst defame mée throughout all my Empire, saying, that my breath did stink so grievously, that it was death to thée: and in token thereof, thou turnedst away thy face when thou servedst me at my Cure, and that I saw with mine eyes: and for this cause I or-

dained for thée ſuch a death, and yet thou ſhalt dye, except I heare a better excuſe.

Then anſwered Fulgentius, and ſaid Ah deare Lord, if it might pleaſe your Highneſſe for to heare me, I ſhal ſhew you a ſubtill and deceitfull imaginatiõ. Say on, quoth the Emperour.

The Steward (quoth Fulgentius) that now is dead, came to me and ſaid, that yée told unto him that my breath did ſtinke, and thereupon he counſelled me, that when I ſerved you of your Cup, I ſhould turne away my face: I take God to witneſſe, I lye not.

When the Emperour heard this, hee believed him, and ſaid: O my Nephew, now I ſee through the right wiſe judgement of God, the Steward is burnt, and his owne wickedneſſe and envie is fallen on himſelfe, for he ordained this malice againſt thée, and therefore thou art much bound to almighty God that hath preſerved thée from death.

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour betokeneth every ſupreme Magiſtrate. And Fulgentius his nephew betokeneth every true Chriſtian man, which ſhould truly ſerve them with faithful loyalty, like as Fulgentius

tius served the Emperour at his Cup, wherefore he shall be greatly loved of God. This Steward betokeneth every false Christian man, as Kain, which oftentimes turneth the heart of right wise men from God, saying, that his breath stinketh, that is, that the life of this Magistrate is not acceptable to God or man, which is against the Scripture, which saith, Iudge not, and ye shall not be judged. But oftentimes such malicious people accuse righteous men, wherefore they shall bee cast into the everlasting fire of hell, where is wayling, weeping, and misery without end. But the righteous shall ascend to everlasting life. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Tyrants and ungodly persons walke without knowledge of the truth, till they come to the Church of God: the wicked persecute the godly, but as they are preserved by the mighty providence of God, so we ought not to sleep in sin. A figurative speech of three severall meanings, *viz.* Take, Yeeld, and Flee, the signification thereof.

The 42. Hiſtory.

THere dwelt ſometime in Rome a mighty Emperor named Delphinus, which had no children ſave only a daughter, which was a faire creature, and well beloved of her father.

As this Emperour rode on a day on hunting in the Forreſt, ſuddenly hee rode out of his way, and loſt his men, wherefore hee was greatly diſcomforted, for hee wiſt not whither he rode, nor in what place he was; till at the laſt, when he had thus ridden all the day alone, in the evening he ſaw a houſe, and thither he rode a great pace, and knocked at the gate: immediatly the good man of the houſe heard him, and asked the cauſe of his knocking, and what he would have? Deare friend, quoth the Emperour, loe it is night as yee may ſee, therefore I deſire you of lodging for the love of God.

When hee had thus ſaid, the good man of the houſe, unware that he was the Emperour, anſwered and ſaid: Good friend, quoth he, I am the Emperors Forſter, and have plenty of veniſon, and other victuall for you. When the Emperour heard this he was right glad in his mind, neverthe-

leſſe

lesse he told him not that he was the Emperour. Then the Fostar opened the gate, and received him as kindly as he could, and set him to supper, and served him worthily. And when he had supped, the Fosser brought him to his Chamber, and when time was he went to bed.

In the same night it befell that the Fosters wife did travell of child in another chamber hard by, and was delivered the same night of a goodly sonne. And as the Emperour lay in his bed, sleeping; him seemed he heard a voyce saying to him thrice, these words, Take, take, take. And with that he awoke, and marvailed greatly what it might be, saying to himselfe thus: A voyce biddeth me take, take, take, What shall I take? And Immediatly he fell asleepe againe.

And the second time, he heard a voyce, saying unto him these words, Yeeld, yeeld, yeeld. And with that he awakened again, and wondered greatly, saying unto himselfe: What may this signifie? First, I heard a voyce that said, Take, take, take, and nothing I received: And right now I heard another voyce that said, Yeeld, yeeld, yeeld: What should I yeeld?

And as he lay thus thinking to him-

ſelfe, hee fell aſleepe againe. And then hee heard the third voice, ſaying theſe words thrice: Flee, flee, flee, for this night is a child borne, that after thy deceaſe ſhall be Emperour. When the Emperour heard this, he wakened, and wondered greatly what it might be

In the morning following, the Emperour called to him the Foſter, and ſaid: Deare friend, I pray thee tell mee if any Child be borne hereabout this night to thy knowledge. My wife, quoth the Foſter, this night is delibered of a ſon. I pray thee, ſaid the Emperour, ſhew me thy Sonne. When the Emperour had ſéen the child, he ſaw a mark in the childs viſage, whereby he might know him another time, and then he ſaid to the Foſter thus:

Deare friend, knoweſt thou who I am? Nay ſoothly, quoth the Foſter, for I never ſaw you before this time, as farre as I can remember, nevertheleſſe it ſéemeth that ye be a gentleman. Then anſwered the Emperour, and ſaid, I am the Emperour your Lord, whom you have lodged this night: wherefore I give thée heartie thankes. This hearing the Foſter, he fell downe upon both his knées at his fét and beſought him of mercy, if that he had offended

fended his Highnesse in any thing. Then answered the Emperour, and said, be thou nothing afraid, for I thanke thee heartily for thy good cheare, and thy Son that was borne to night, I will have to bring up in my Court, and shortly I wil send for him.

O my gracious Lord, quoth the Foster, it is not fit that such a noble Emperour should nourish the child of his subject and servant, nevertheless your will be fulfilled, and when your messengers come, I shall deliver them my Son.

Then the Emperour took his leave and rode home to his Pallace. And shortly after he was come home, he called unto him such servants as he trusted best, and said to them thus: Go yee, quoth hee, unto my Foster, with whom I was lodged such a night in the Forrest, and receive of him his Son, of which his wife was delivered that night, and upon paine of death I command you that ye slay him by the way and cast his flesh to the dogs, but bring with you the heart to me: And except ye fulfill my commandement, yee shall die the most foulest death that can be thought. Anon his Servants went to the Forrest, and received the Fosters sonne, and brought him with them, and when they were come neer

unto

unto the Pallace, one of them ſaid: How ſhall we doe, that we may fulfill our Lords commandement in ſlaying of this child? Some anſwered, and ſaid, that the child ſhould be ſlaine, and ſome would have his life ſaved, and while they were thus ſtriving among themſelves, one of them, that was moſt merciſull, ſaid unto the reſt: O my good loving friends, heare my counſell, I beſæch you, and ye ſhall not repent you thereof. If ye murther this innocent Child, wee ſhall greatly offend Almighty God: And behold hereby are young Pigges, kill wee one of them, and then may we take with us his heart, and preſent it unto the Emperour, ſaying, that it is the heart of the young child. Then ſaid they, thy counſell is good: but what ſhall wee doe with the Child? Good friends (quoth he) let us wrap him in ſome cloths, and lay him in ſome hollow tree, for peradventure God will helpe him, and ſave his life. When he had thus ſaid, they did after his counſell in all things, and killed a Pigge, and went their way and carryed home with them the Pigges heart to the Emperour, ſaying unto him thus: Loe, gracious Lord, wee have deſtroyed the child as ye commanded us, and with that

they

they shewed him the Pigges heart. The Emperour supposing it had been the childs heart, tooke it and cast it into the fire despightfully saying: Loe; there is the heart of him which should have been Emperour after mee. Loe what it is to beleeve in dreames, which be but fantasies and vaine things.

The same day after the Childe was put into the hollow tree, there came an Earle to hunt in the Forrest, and as his Hounds chased an Hart, they came to the hollow tree where the child lay, and when they felt the savour of the child they would goe no further. The Earle seeing this, marvelled why his Hounds abode there, and smote his horse with his spurres, hee rode a great pace till hee came in to them. And when hee came unto the tree wherein the Child was laid, he looked in at a hole, and saw there the Child lying and then he was right glad, and tooke the Child up in his armes full lovingly, and bare it home to his Castle, saying unto the Countesse his wife: Loe my deare Wife, this day by fortune I have found a very fair child in an hollow tree as I hunted in the Forrest, whereof I am right glad: And because thou never yet conceived

vedst a child, therefore I erhort thee that thou wilt faine thy selfe to travaile with childe, and say that thou hast borne this child. The Countesse fulfilled gladly the Earles desire, and said. My most deare Lord, your will in this thing shall be done.

Not long after this, newes went throughout all the country, that the Countesse was delivered of a faire son, wherefore every man rejoyced much.

The Childe began to grow, and was well beloved of every man, and especially of the Earle and the Countesse. It befell when the child was fifteene yéres of age, the Emperour made a solemne feast unto all the Lords of his Empire, unto the which feast this Earle was called, who at the day assigned; came and brought his Sonne with him, which was at that time a faire young Squire, and hee carved at the bord before the Earle. The Emperour stedfastly beheld him, and espyed the token in his forehead which he had seene before in the Fosters house, wherewith hee was greatly moved within himselfe, and said unto the Earle in this manner. Whose Sonne is this? Certes said the Earle, hee is my Sonne. Then said the Emperour. By the faith that thou owest

to me, tell me the truth.

The Earle seeing that he might not excuse himselfe, but that needs hee must tell him the truth, told how he found him in a hollow Tree. This hearing, the Emperour he was almost distract of his wits for anger, and called to him his servants, which hee had sent before to destroy the child. And when they came before him, he made them to sweare that they should tell him the truth what they had done with the child.

Gracious Lord, said they, we yéld us unto your Grace and gwonelle, for pity so moved us, that we might not destroy him, but we put him in a hollow Tree: what befell of him afterward, certainely wee know not, and in his steap wee killed a Pigge, and brought the heart thereof unto you.

When the Emperour had heard the truth of the matter, he said unto the Earle, This young man (quoth hee) shall abide with me: the Earle immediately granted, though it was greatly against his will.

When the feast was ended, every man tooke his leave of the Emperour, and went whereas they list. And at that time it fortuned that the Empresse and her

daughter

daughter ſojourned in another Countrey farre from thence, by the commandement of the Emperour. It been not long after the Emperor ſaid unto this young ſquire, it behoveth thee to ride unto the Empreſſe my wife with my Letters. I am ready at your commandement my Lord, ſaid he to fulfill your deſire. Immediately the Emperour wrote Letters, the intent whereof was this. That the Empreſſe ſhould take the bearer of theſe Letters, and let him be drawn at the horſe tayle, and after that ſhe ſhould let him be hanged till he were dead, and that on paine of death. When the Letters were all ſealed, the Emperour took them unto the young Squire, commanding him to ſpeed him on his journey. And ſtraight way the young Squire put them cloſe into a box, and rode forth on his journey. When he had ridden three or foure daies on his journey, in an evening he came unto a Caſtle where dwelt a Knight, and gently deſired of him a nights lodging.

The Knight beholding the ſweet ſadour of the yong Squire, made him good cheer, & afterward brought him into his chamber and when he was there, he went to bed: and immediately fell aſleep, for he was full

full weary of his journey, and forgot his box with the Letters lying openly in his chamber.

When the Knight saw the box, hee opened it, and found the Letters sealed with the Emperours sign mannall, and was greatly tempted to open them, and at the last he opened them neatly, and then read how the Empresse upon pain of death should put the bearer of them to death, and then hee was right sorrowfull, and said within himselfe: Alas (quoth he) it is great pity to slay so fair and proper a man, and immediately after the Knight raced out that writing, and wrote in the same place these words following: Upon paine of death I command thee, that thou take this young Squire, bearer of these Letters, and let him be wedded without any delay unto my Daughter and yours, with all the honour and solemnity that can bee thought, and when they be married that ye make as much account of him, as if he were your own son, and that hee supply my rome till I come unto you my selfe.

When the Knight had thus written; he closed the Letters neatly, and put them into the box againe. Early in the morning the young Knight arose, and very hastily

haſtily made him ready, and tooke his leave of the Knight and rode forth on his journey, and the third day after hée came unto the Empreſſe, & ſaluted her dutifully in the Emperors behalfe, and gave her the Letters. When the Empreſſe had read them, anon ſhe ſent forth her meſſengers through the Countrey, commanding the States and Gentlemen to come unto her Daughters wedding at a day aſſigned.

When the day was come, thither came many great Lords and Ladies, and anon the young Squire eſpouſed the Emperors daughter, with great honour, according to the tenour of the Letters, and was much honoured among the people.

Not long after it befell, that the Emperour came into that Countrey, and when the Empreſſe heard of his comming, ſhee tooke with her, her ſon in law, with much other people, and went to welcome the Emperour. When the Emperor ſaw this young Squire leading the Lady his wife, he was greatly moved within himſelfe, and ſaid: O thou curſed woman, becauſe thou haſt not fulfilled my commandment thou ſhalt dye an evill death.

O my deare Lord (quoth ſhee) all that you commanded me to do, I have fulfilled.

Nay

Nay cursed woman said the Emperour, it is not so, For I wrote to thee that thou shouldest put him to death, & yet he is alive. My Lord, quoth the Empresse, you wrote to me that I should give him your daughter to wife, and that on paine of death, in witnesse whereof loe here your Letters sealed with your own seale mannuell.

When the Emperour saw this, he wondred greatly and said. Is he then espoused to my daughter? Yes surely said the Empresse long ago, with great solemnity, and as I perceive your daughter is with child. Then said the Emperour: O Lord Jesu, it is great folly to strive against thine ordinance, therefore sith it is so, thy will must needs be fulfilled. And with that he took his sonne in law in his armes, and kissed him, which after his death was Emperor, and ended his life in rest and peace.

The Morall.

This Emperour may betoken Herod; who would have slaine the child Jesu, wherefore he sent messengers to seek him, according to the Scripture, shewing how he commanded three Kings to seek him, and bring him tidings againe where he was, that he might come and worship him also,

The Foster betokeneth Ioseph, our Ladies husband, which kept him: but when the three Kings came they slew him not, but worshipped him on their knees, and left him in the hollow tree of his Godhead. The Carle that found this child, betokeneth the holy Ghost which warned Ioseph by the Angel in his sleep, that hee should take our Lady and her Sonne and flee into Egypt.

By the first take, may be understood the great benefit that hee gave thee when hee gave thee a Soule made to his own similitude. By the second take, is understood the sonne of God, which was born of the blessed Virgin Mary. By the third take, is understood the same sonne of God which dyed upon the Crosse.

By the first yeeld, is understood that we ought to yeeld our soule unto Almighty God, as clean as he gave it us after our regeneration in Baptism. By the second yeeld, that we ought to yeeld honour, worship, and love unto Almighty God, and man. By the third yeeld, that we ought to yeeld to God true confession of faith, contrition of heart, and amendment of life. The first flee, betokeneth sinne, which wee should flee. The second

flee,

flee, betokeneth the world, which we should flee, for the great temptations that are there in. The third flee, betokeneth everlasting paine, the which we ought to flee, through faith, by the which we may come to everlasting blisse: unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

The soule of man being ravished by the tyranny of sinne, shee complaineth unto Christ, which heareth her. The Tyrant is overcome by Christ, who espouseth her unto him, preparing a place of perpetuall joy for her. Christ receiveth the patient sinner to his mercy by his death and passion.

The 43. Historie.

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Santasinus, which ordained a law, that whosoever ravished a Virgin should die, and if she were rescued, then he that rescued her should have her to wife, if him list; and if he would not marry her, then she should be espoused by his appointment. It befell on a day that a Tyrant named Poncianus, led a Virgin into a Forrest and deloured her of her

Mayden-head. And when he had ſo done, hee would have ſlaine her, and as he was diſpoyling her of her cloathes, there came riding by the Forreſt a gentle Knight, which heard the lamenting of the Damſell, wherefore he rode a great pace into the Forreſt to ſee what it might be. Now when he came, he ſaw a woman ſtanding all naked, ſave only her ſmocke, to whom th Knight ſpake: Art thou ſhee (ſaid hee) that cryed ſo lamentably? Then anſwered the Damſell; Yea certainly, for this man that ſtandeth here hath raviſhed me, and deſloured me of my Mayden-head, and now he would ſlay me, and therefore he hath diſpoyled me of my cloathes: for the love of God, gentle Knight, helpe me now. Then ſaid the Tyrant, ſhee lyeth, for ſhee is my wife, and I have found her in adultery with another man, therefore I will ſlay her. Then ſaid the Knight, I beleeve better the woman then thee, for loe, the tokens appeare openly in her viſage, that thou haſt raviſhed her, therefore will I fight with thee for her deliverance. And immediately they buckled both together, and fought eagerly, till they were both ſore wounded. Nevertheleſſe the Knight obtained the victory, and put the tyrant to flight.

When

Then said the Knight unto the woman Loe, I have suffered for thy love many sore wounds, and have saved thee from death, wilt thou therefore promise to be my wife? Thereto I assent quoth she, with all my heart, and thereupon I plight thee my troth. When they were thus ensured, then said the Knight as followeth.

Here beside is my Castle, go thither, and abide there till I have provided all things needfull for our wedding, for I purpose to make a great feast thereat. My Lord, quoth she, I am ready to fulfill your will. Then went shee unto his Castle, whereas she was worthily received: and the Knight went unto his friends, for to bid them to the marriage. In the meane while came Poncianus the Tyrant to the Knights Castle, and prayed her that hee might speak with her. Then came shee down from the Castle to him, and this Tyrant subtily flattered her, and said: Gentle Love, if it please you to consent to me, I shall give you both silver and gold and great riches, and I shall be your servant, and yee my soveraigne. When the woman heard this, full lightly shee was deceived through his flattering language, and soone granted him to be his wife, and took

him

him to her in the Caſtle.

Not long after the Knight came home and fonnd the Caſtle gate ſhut, & knocked thereat, but long it was ere he might have anſwer. At the laſt the woman came and demanded why hee knocked at the gate. Then ſaid hee to her: O ſweet Lady why haſt thou ſo ſoone changed thy love? let me come in. Nay ſurely, ſaid ſhee, thou ſhalt not come here, for I have here with me my Love which I loved before. Remember quoth the Knight thou gaveſt me thy troth to be my wife, and how I ſaved thee from death, and if thou ponder not thy faith, behold my wounds, which I have ſuffered in my body for thy love. And ſo he unclothed himſelfe naked all ſave his hoſen, that he might ſhew his wounds openly. But ſhee would not ſee them nor ſpeak more with him, but ſhut faſt the gate, & went her way. Now when the Knight ſaw this, hee went to the Juſtice and made his complaint to him, praying him to give right wiſe judgement on the Tyrant and the woman.

Then the Judge called them both before him, and when they were come, the Knight ſaid thus: My Lord, quoth hee, I aſk the benefit of the Law, which is this: If a man reſcue a woman from ra-

wishing, the rescuer shall marry her if him list, and this woman I delivered from the hands of the Tyrant, therefore I ought to have her to my wife: and furthermore she gave me her faith and troth to marry with me, and thereupon she went to my Castle, and I have bene at great cost against our wedding, and therefore as it seemeth me, she is my wife by the Law. Then said the Judge to the Tyrant, thou knowest well that this Knight delivered her from thy hand, and for her love hath suffered grievous wounds, and therefore well thou wottest that she is his wife by the Law, if that him list. But after her deliverance with flattering speech thou hast deceived her, therefore I judge thee to be hanged.

Then said the Judge to the Woman likewise: O woman, thou knowest how this Knight saved thee from death, and thereupon thou betrothedst him thy faith and troth to be his wife, therefore by two reasons thou art his wife; first, by the Law, and after by faith and troth. This notwithstanding, thou consentedst afterward to the Tyrant, and broughtest him into the Knights Castle and shuttest the gate against the Knight, and wouldest not see his wounds which he suffered for thy love,

and therefore I judge thee to be hanged also. And so it was done, both the raviſher and ſhe that was raviſhed, were condemned to death, wherefore every man prayſed the Judge for his wiſe judgement.

The Morall.

This Emperour betokeneth the Father of heaven, which ordained a law that if the Soule of man were raviſhed from God, by ſinne, the ſaver of the ſoule ſhould eſpouſe her, if him liſt. The woman that was raviſhed betokeneth the ſoule of man, which was raviſhed by the ſinne of our fore-Father Adam, and let out of Paradiſe into the Forreſt of this wretched World, by the Tyrant Poncianus, which betokeneth the Devill, and he not onely defiled her, by leeſing the heritage of heaven, but alſo he would ſlay her with everlaſting paine. But the ſoule cryeth with an high voyce, whoſe cry our Lord Jeſus Chriſt heard. This cry was made when Adam cryed after the oyle of Mercy: and the Patriarks and Prophets cryed for remedy, ſaying theſe words: O thou the higheſt in the Eaſt, viſit thou us, &c. The Knight betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which came from Heaven, and fought with the

Tyrant,

Tyrant, that is the Devil, and both they were sore wounded. For our Lord Jesus Christ was wounded in the flesh, and the Devil maimed in his Kingdome, wherefore the Woman, that is, the Soule, gave her Faith and Troth unto Christ Jesus, when he became a Christian, saying these words; I forsake the Divell and all his pride, and believe in God the Father Almighty. Then ordained our Lord Jesus Christ a marriage between him and her, with the two speciall Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper, whereof may be made a strong Castle against the devil. Also our Lord commanded the soul to kæp her still in the Castle of vertue, till hee went to provide that was nædfull: that is, our Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven to prepare for her a dwelling place of everlasting joy, whereas we should dwell after the day of Judgement with our Lord God in honour and glory.

But alas, in the meane time came the Devil and beguiled the wretched soule by a deadly sinne, and so hee entred into the Castle of our heart, which should be the Castle of God. The Knight Jesu knocked at the gate of our heart, according to the Scripture, Loe I stand at the doore and knock,

knock, if any man will open, that I may enter. But where the Devill is, God doth not enter, except the ſinner will receive him by repentance, which ſeeing our Lord hanging on the Croſſe, that we may ſee his bloody wounds which he ſuffered for us, we ſinners ſhould be the rather mindfull of his love. For, from the crown of his head unto the ſole of his feet, was left no whole place. Therefore ſaith the Prophet Eſay, behold and ſee, if any ſorrow be like to my ſorrow. Therefore he is a wretched man that will not be converted unto his Lord God, but lieth ſtill in deadly ſinne, wherefore when hee is called before the high Judge, he ſhall be condemned to everlaſting death. Therefore ſtudy wee to open the doors of our hearts by fruitfull faith in Almighty God, and then without doubt we ſhall obtaine everlaſting life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jeſu Chriſt. Amen.

The Argument.

The Body and Soule of a man being made (by Gods grace) the Temple of the holy Ghoſt, doe give themſelves to ſerve and pleaſe God in this life, and to love God and their Neighbours according to his lawes: and though the body by death

death suffer Mortall affliction for a time, yet by Faith, Hope and Charity in Iesus Christ, both body and soule shall inherit life and joy everlasting.

The 44. History.

IT is read of a certain Roman Emperour, which erecting for himselfe a goodly monument or Tomb, as the Labourers digged in the ground of his Palace, they found a Coffin of gold bound about with three hoops, and upon the hoops was ingraven these words, I have spent, I have given, I have kept, I have had, I now have, I have lost, I am punished. That which I spent I had, That which I gave I have. When the Emperour saw this, he called together his Nobles and States, and said unto them: My Lords, goe and consider among your selves, what this Inscription meaneth: Unto whom the Nobles shortly after returned this answer saying, the meaning of this Inscription is no otherwise but this: There was a certaine Emperour your predecessour, which desired to leave behind him an example to others, that they might follow him in good life, and conversation, viz, I have spent my life in judg-

ing

ing others righteouſly, and governing any ſelfe according to the rule of reaſon. I have given, to my Souldiers things neceſſary: unto the poore maintenance and living: and to every one as to my ſelfe, according to their deſerts. I have kept, in all my workes, righteouſneſſe, mercy to them that need it, and to workmen their worthy wages. I have had, a liberall and a conſtant heart to every one which ſerved me, I have given riches in their neceſſity, and loving favour at all times, I have had, a hand to tame and ſubdue enemies, to protect and defend friends, and to puniſh offenders. I have loſt, foolihneſſe, the friendſhip of enemies, and luſt or lacivouſneſſe of the fleſh. I am puniſhed now by death, becauſe I believed not as I ought to have done, in one God eternall. I am puniſhed I ſay, alas, becauſe I cannot redeeme my ſelfe but by the merits of Chriſt Jeſus the Saviour of the World. When the Emperour aforeſaid heard the meaning of the inſcriptions wiſely interpreted on this manner, and how long that deceaſed Emperour had lived, he thereby governed himſelfe and his ſubjects more providently, and ended his life in Gods peace, with much honour.

The

The Morall.

Deare friends, this Emperour may be called every good Christian man or woman, which ought and is bound to erect and re-edifie a Tomb, that is, his heart prepared unto God, that he may performe his will above all things, and so digged in the ground of his heart by contrition and sorrowfull repentance for his sinnes, and so shall hee find a golden Coffin, that is, a body dead to sinne, but his soule garnished with vertues, by Gods grace so granted the same, and bound about with three golden hoopes, viz. with Faith, Hope, and Charitie. What then was ingraven in the same three hoopes? First, I have spent: where it may be asked, what hast thou spent? The good Christian answereth, my body and soule in the service of God: if any of you bestow his temporall life so, hee shall bee assured of a great reward, even of life everlasting. The second inscription, is, I have kept. What hast thou kept? the good Christian answereth, a contrite and humble heart, and prepared unto God, to do whatsoever his good pleasure was. The third inscription, is, I have given, what hast thou given?